



Aalto University  
School of Business

Mikkeli Campus

## ACHIEVING THE IDEALS: WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN SALES MANAGEMENT POSITIONS IN FINLAND

Reeta Rissanen

International Business  
Bachelor's Thesis  
Supervisor: Kate Black  
Date of approval: 9 April 2020

Aalto University  
School of Business  
Bachelor's Program in International Business  
Mikkeli Campus

## ACHIEVING THE IDEALS: WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN SALES MANAGEMENT POSITIONS IN FINLAND

Reeta Rissanen

International Business  
Bachelor's Thesis  
Supervisor: Kate Black  
Date of approval: 9 April 2020

Aalto University  
School of Business  
Bachelor's Program in International Business  
Mikkeli Campus

**Author:** Reeta Rissanen

**Title of thesis:** Achieving the Ideals: Work-Life Balance in Sales Management Positions in Finland

**Date:** 9 April 2020

**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Economics and Business Administration

**Supervisor:** Kate Black

### Objectives

The main objective of this study was to explore which factors help or hinder the work-life balance of sales managers employed in Finland. In addition to this inquiry, this research investigated how sales managers valued work-life balance, what factors they thought help or hinder achieving it and which actions they would take or avoid in order to have a good work-life balance.

### Summary

The research surveyed sales managers employed in Finland, its aim being to measure eight different hypotheses in addition to three open-ended questions for content analysis. The hypotheses and open-ended questions were created and proposed based on the scientific background and theoretical framework built in the literature review.

### Conclusions

Based on the quantitative analysis, digitalisation and globalisation have a negative effect on sales managers' perception of achieving a good work-life balance. In addition, stress issues, busyness and work overload have a negative impact on their work-life balance, while the impact of organisational support is positive. Correlations between work-life balance and emotional intelligence, and work-life balance and job engagement were not found. The content analysis made on the basis of the open-ended question revealed that sales managers appreciate the feeling of all life domains fulfilling each other so that it does not feel like any domain is taking over.

**Key words:** Sales management, sales leadership, sales, work-life balance, Finland

**Language:** English

**Grade:**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Background
- 1.2. Research Problem
- 1.3. Research Questions
- 1.4. Research Objectives
- 1.5. Outline

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

- 2.1. Introduction
  - 2.1.1. Background to Sales and Sales Management
  - 2.1.2. The Concept of Work-Life Balance
    - 2.1.2.1. Work-Life Balance from a Social Point-of-View
    - 2.1.2.2. Work-Life Balance from an Individual Point-of-View
    - 2.1.2.3. Work-Life Balance from an Employer Point-of-View
- 2.2. The Complex and Evolving Role of Sales Managers
- 2.3. The Importance of Work-Life Balance within Sales Management Positions
  - 2.3.1. The Importance of Work-Life Balance to the Sales Manager
  - 2.3.2. The Importance of Sales Manager's Work-Life Balance to the Salespeople
  - 2.3.3. The Importance of Sales Manager's Work-Life Balance to the Organisation
- 2.4. Theoretical Framework
  - 2.4.1. Border Theory
  - 2.4.2. Spill-Over Theory
  - 2.4.3. Inter-Role Conflict
  - 2.4.4. Conservation of Resources Theory
- 2.5. Changes in the Sales Environment
  - 2.5.1. Digitalisation
  - 2.5.2. Globalisation
- 2.6. Factors Affecting Work-Life Balance
  - 2.6.1. Helping Factors
    - 2.6.1.1. Job Engagement
    - 2.6.1.2. Organisational Support
    - 2.6.1.3. Emotional Intelligence
  - 2.6.2. Hindering Factors
    - 2.6.2.1. Stress Issues
    - 2.6.2.2. Work Overload
    - 2.6.2.3. Busyness
- 2.7. Conclusion
- 2.8. Conceptual Framework

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Approach and Data Collection

##### 3.1.1. Sampling

##### 3.1.2. Survey Instrument

#### 3.2. Limitations of Methodology

### 4. FINDINGS

#### 4.1. Background of the Respondents

#### 4.2. Quantitative Data

##### 4.2.1. Data for Hypotheses

##### 4.2.2. Additional Data

#### 4.3. Qualitative Data

### 5. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

#### 5.1. Assessment of Findings

##### 5.1.1. Sales Managers' Perceptions of a Good Work-Life Balance

##### 5.1.2. Having or Being Able to Achieve a Good Work-Life Balance

##### 5.1.3. Factors that Help or Hinder Achieving a Good Work-Life Balance

###### 5.1.3.1. Impacts of Changes in the Sales Environment to Work-Life Balance

###### 5.1.3.2. Factors that Help to Achieve a Good Work-Life Balance

###### 5.1.3.3. Factors that Hinder Achieving a Good Work-Life Balance

### 6. CONCLUSIONS

#### 6.1. Main Findings

#### 6.2. Implications for International Business

#### 6.3. Limitations of the Research

#### 6.4. Suggestions for Further Research

### REFERENCES

### APPENDICES

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1. Background**

Sales managers play an important role in the organisation. Being responsible for sales and as the link between the sales team and the organisation, their role tends to be highly stressful and demanding (Kemp et al., 2013). However, despite the vital role and its complexity, the field of sales management is particularly under researched (Plank et al. 2018; Busch 2013). This is especially true with the amount of studies on the wellbeing and work-life balance of sales managers, although studies in this field would be crucial (Russo & Morandin, 2019).

The field of sales management has experienced significant changes in the past years. Amid revolutions in digitalisation and globalisation, the role of sales managers has evolved and become more challenging than before (Cuevas, 2018). Thus, in order to keep up the high performance and stay in pace with sales goals, it is highly important to keep the domains of work and life in balance. This, however, can be very difficult, as the job is very demanding – the ability to work anywhere and anytime, as well as increasing cross time-zone interaction do not help with the issue. The challenging lifestyle of sales managers, affected by the phenomena of digitalisation and globalisation, the complexity of their role, and different personal, social and organisational factors, calls out for better work-life balance.

This thesis seeks to investigate the work-life balance of sales managers employed in Finland in order to find out what they consider a good work-life balance to be like and whether they have achieved it or could achieve it. All in all, this topic is very important, as it could potentially help the whole organisation to increase their performance.

## **1.2. Research Problem**

The research problem of this study is to understand and explore the limited research area of sales managers and their work-life balance. The research seeks to understand whether the work-life balance of sales managers employed in Finland has been affected by factors such as digitalisation and globalisation and whether they feel like it

would even be possible for them to have a good work-life balance. The literature review of this study will provide a scientific base for the research, introducing different theories and concepts that the author assumes have an impact on the balance between work and life of sales managers. Furthermore, a quantitative study and content analysis of these concepts is conducted in order to test the hypotheses and answer the research questions made by the author.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

Through research, the aim of this thesis is to answer the following questions:

1. What do sales managers employed in Finland consider a good work-life balance to be like in their position?
2. Do sales managers employed in Finland feel they have achieved or can achieve a good work-life balance due to their position?
3. Which factors do sales managers employed in Finland consider to help or hinder achieving a good work-life balance in their position?

These research questions will be explored further with the help of quantitative and content analysis of sales managers, backed up by the review of literature and the theoretical tools.

### **1.4. Research Objectives**

The objectives of this research go hand in hand with the research questions presented above. The research objectives are as follow:

1. To qualitatively define what sales managers identify as a good work-life balance through content analysis
2. To quantitatively and qualitatively determine how sales managers feel about their current work-life balance and whether they could achieve a good work-life balance
3. To quantitatively and qualitatively examine how sales managers balance their work and life and which actions they may take or avoid in order to do so

## **1.5. Outline**

This thesis will begin with the literature review that introduces the key concepts and theories of this study. These concepts and theories will help understand what this study is about and why it is important. They will also play a part in interpreting the findings of this thesis. After the literature review, the methodology of this research is introduced in addition to the limitations of the research. Next, the findings of the study on the work-life balance of sales managers employed in Finland will be presented, followed by discussion and analysis of how the hypotheses and research questions were met. The research will be concluded by highlighting main findings, implications and limitations. Based on the results, suggestions for further research will be provided.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This literature review was conducted to assess and critically analyse research that has already been done on sales management and the concept of work-life balance. The aim of this literature review is to build a strong scientific platform for this research by reviewing literature that helps explain why it is crucial for sales managers to achieve and attain balance between their work and life – albeit it being fairly challenging. Through the analysis of different topics, it will also build an understanding for the research questions of this study.

This thesis attempts to explore what sales managers employed in Finland consider work-life balance to be like, whether they feel like they have achieved or can achieve a work-life balance and which factors help or hinder achieving it. This topic is important to study as the results could provide valuable information that could help organisations and sales managers develop and pay attention to their work-life balance.

The literature review will begin by first introducing background to sales and sales management and the concept of work-life balance. Next, analysis on the complex and



evolving role of sales managers is provided, followed by literature on the importance of work-life balance in sales management positions. A theoretical framework will be provided in order to base the research on theory, after which factors that have changed the field of sales management in the past decade are reviewed, and selected factors affecting work-life balance will be introduced. A conclusion and a conceptual framework will be presented at the end.

### **2.1.1. Background to Sales and Sales Management**

Collins Dictionary (2020) describes sales as “the profession of trying to sell on behalf of a company” and “the department of a company that is responsible for selling its products” and a sales manager as “a manager in charge of the sales department and responsible for its performance, organisation and planning”. Sales managers are also people responsible for providing the tools and training necessary to their sales team so that the organisation could achieve their goals and targets related to increasing sales volume, profit and customer relationships (Cravens et al., 1993; Ford & Collinson, 2011; Deeter-Schmelz et al., 2002). Based on their findings, Kemp et al. (2013) concluded that sales managers are a vital link between the salesperson and the organisation and can play a crucial part in the emotional health and success of salespeople.

In their recent and comprehensive article that analyses empirical research in which sales manager is the unit of analysis, Plank et al. (2018) point out that although it seems that a lot of research has been done on sales, only a little of that research falls into the category of sales management and the role and nature of sales managers. To quote (2018: 78), “Sales research that has used sales managers as respondents has frequently done so to obtain information about their salespeople rather than to obtain information about themselves or their roles as sales managers.” Although Plank et al. do not provide a specific data analysis of their results, this finding is also supported by Busch (2013), who highlights that further research is necessary to understand sales management competence since frontline sales managers have the most critical role in a productive sales force. In fact, a lot of the studies concerning sales managers have been done from the salespeople perspective, such as how sales managers can help and support salespeople, what their impact on salespeople is, and how managers

affect salespeople job satisfaction. For comprehensive examples, see e.g. Kemp et al. (2013), Ruzic et al. (2018) and Gabler and Hill (2015).

Although research like this is important, it is still necessary to know more about and concentrate more on sales managers themselves, as currently our understanding of the subject is limited (Plank et al. 2018). In addition, professions in sales leadership are projected to become even more crucial in today's sales organisations (Cuevas, 2018), which adds to the fact that more research on sales management should be conducted.

### **2.1.2. The Concept of Work-Life Balance**

Work-life balance can be understood as the satisfaction in work and nonwork life domains caused by equal amounts of engagement in work and nonwork roles (Kirchmeyer, 2000; Greenhaus et al., 2003). Guest (2002: 262) gave work-life balance a subjective definition as “a perceived balance between work and the rest of life”. The concept has been criticised of trying to separate the inseparable, “work” and “life” (Donkin, 2014), and of assuming that work would steal time away from the “real life” of employees and that the “real life” would solely revolve around family and child care (Warhurst et al., 2014). Ford & Collinson (2011) also criticise the concept as rather pressuring and controlling than helpful. However, the descriptions of the concept vary in relevant literature. To further develop and grasp a better understanding of what is meant by work-life balance in this literature review, different descriptions of work-life balance are hereby introduced by discerning them into brief categories of social, individual and employer focused definitions. These categories also help explain how work-life balance does not solely mean separating work and life, or that real life would only mean family. Thus, a more solid and scientific ground is built for the research.

#### **2.1.2.1. Work-Life Balance from a Social Point-of-View**

Some studies describe work-life balance as a social phenomenon, meaning that work-life balance connects to all the different social aspects in life. These studies concentrate on different social domains that work-life balance influences. For example,

Karakas and Lee (2004: 57) identified work-life balance with six dimensions that consisted of “spending high quality time with family members, being able to relax in free time, emotional well-being and health of family members, high quality communication and support, high quality child care and education, satisfaction with work and work load at home.” In a similar vein, Benito-Osorio et al. (2014) translated the definition of work-life balance by Teixeira and Nascimiento (2011) as the balance that is crucial to have in order to avoid conflicts between the domains of work and family. This definition is supported by the earlier definition by Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) who defined work-life balance as the absence of conflict between family and work spheres.

#### **2.1.2.2. Work-Life Balance from an Individual Point-of-View**

Reiter (2007: 277) defined work-life balance from an individualistic standpoint. She described the balance as achieving “satisfying experiences in all life domains to a level consistent with the salience of each role for the individual... [that] introduces the possibility of a hierarchy of roles; however... it does not demand that a hierarchy is neither desirable nor necessary for balance”. The definition by Reiter is also supported by Clark (2002), who defined work-life balance as minimum role conflict as a result of good functioning and satisfaction at home and at work. Controversially, Guest (2002) raised the question of the inseparable work and life and the vague border between the roles. However, McDonald and Bradley (2005), revised the definition and described work-life balance, in its broadest sense, to mean a satisfactory level of involvement or fit between the multiple roles in a person’s life.

#### **2.1.2.3. Work-Life Balance from an Employer Point-of-View**

Lewis (2000) states that paid work and personal life should be seen as complementary elements of a full life rather than as competing priorities. Interestingly, and from an organisational standpoint, Lewis suggests that this balance could be achieved by conceptualising a two-way process that involves considering the needs of employees and employers. As indicated by Littig (2008), the concept of work-life balance has been promoted since the early nineties, when organisations started noticing an increase in the burnout rates of their employees due to not being able to reconcile work and family.

## **2.2. The Complex and Evolving Role of Sales Managers**

Professions in sales leadership are projected to become even more crucial in today's sales organisations (Cuevas, 2018). Cuevas (ibid) highlights three key findings concerning the shifts in the roles of sales managers. Firstly, their sales force has to become more knowledgeable about the customer business – being experts of the products and services is no longer enough. This finding is supported by Verbeke et al. (2012), who argued that the key driver of sales performance is sales-related knowledge of customer insight. Secondly, the relationships between suppliers and customers have become more complex, blurred and far reaching, which is why the traditional, individualistic approach to selling is being re-evaluated. In search for more consistent management process, the autonomy and flexibility of sales professionals has been reduced (Davies et al., 2010). Thirdly, the configuration of the sales organisations and professional selling roles has changed to be more transparent and accountable due to the enforcement of ethics, which is also viewed as an important element of supplier-customer relationships and in sales force effectiveness (Schwepker, 2015).

In addition, the need for salespeople has shrunk. According to Lacoste (2018), one reason for this is the fact that the field of sales has changed from routine, one-shot sales-transactions to strategic, long-term relationship development with key customers. These findings resonate in a study made by sales strategist Wayshak (2018), in which over half the respondents working in a sales profession found selling tougher than five years ago, and almost half the respondents found getting in front of new prospects harder than it was five years ago. Respondents explained that prospects no longer answer their phones and respond to their emails like they used to. This proves that the ways of selling that lead to success in the past are not necessarily the right ways for today's sales force (Ahearne et al., 2010; Evans et al., 2012).

These issues put pressure on sales managers, as they are the ones responsible for helping salespeople find the best solutions for the problems they face (Cravens et al., 1993; Deeter-Schmelz et al., 2002). Solving these issues could be complex, especially when managers must be efficient with the time they spend with their employees, as salespeople are often away from direct supervision (Cicala, 2014). Furthermore, the

Fifth European Working Conditions Survey (2012) found a trend in declining social support from managers and colleagues, which indicates that managers could face a hard time getting their message across.

### **2.3. The Importance of Work-Life Balance within Sales Management Positions**

While finding and maintaining the ideal work-life balance for oneself can be tricky, keeping up with sales management duties and challenges is also difficult. Not only is work-life balance of the sales manager crucial for the managers themselves, it is also important for the salespeople that work under the manager (Braun & Peus, 2018; Ford & Collinson, 2011; Mas-Machuca & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016) and the organisation (Edmans, 2012; Kraft et al. 2019; Mas-Machuca & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016; Russo & Morandin, 2019). A good work-life balance of a sales manager can create a snowball effect in the sales team because salespeople often view their manager as a role model (Huggins et al., 2016).

#### **2.3.1. The Importance of Work-Life Balance to the Sales Manager**

Kirchmeyer (2000) has described work-life balance as achieving satisfactory experiences in all domains of life, through distributing personal resources, such as energy and time, across life domains. It is positively related to quality of life, such as sleeping better, experiencing less stress and feeling healthier and happier (Dominus, 2016; Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw, 2003; Marks & Mac-Dermid, 1996). That is why work-life balance is especially important to maintain in sales management positions where stress is unavoidable and the work is hectic.

Trying to achieve a good work-life balance should be a goal to sales managers. Full commitment to the company is often expected from them, which is why many sales managers work longer hours in order to enhance their performance evaluations and possibilities of getting a pay raise, prioritising work over family. This also links to a paradox that some managers actually seek to work longer hours even though they have the possibility for a more flexible schedule (Ford & Collinson, 2011; Lewis, 2003).

Thus, it has been argued that trying to achieve an ideal work-life balance would only add on to the pressure that sales managers already have (Ford & Collinson, 2011).

However, Mulki et al. (2015) point out that as the nature of the sales profession makes people highly vulnerable for stress and burnout already, increased and continuous workload and stress could worsen negative performance and decreased job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is “a pleasurable or positive emotional state from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke, 1976: 1304). Burnout is caused by chronic work stress and can result to depersonalisation, emotional exhaustion and decreased personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson 1981; Lewin & Sager 2008). However, not only would it be important for the health of the sales manager, it would also improve their success as a leader (Lyness & Judiesch, 2008). Work-life balance has also been linked to have a positive connection to career advancement potential (ibid). However, many managers often feel a sense of guilt if they leave work early (Ford & Collinson, 2011).

### **2.3.2. The Importance of a Sales Manager’s Work-Life Balance to the Salespeople**

Braun and Peus (2018) investigate how the concept of authentic leadership affects the performance, health and wellbeing inside organisations. Authentic leadership emphasises building positive and valued relationships between leaders and followers (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) in order to build health and wellbeing in organisations (Gardner et al., 2011). Their findings support that the positive work-life balance of leaders motivates followers to seek for a better work-life balance as well, which makes them more satisfied with their jobs. These findings were also supported by a study made by Mas-Machuca and Berbegal-Mirabent (2016) who studied how autonomy and supervisor work-life balance are connected to employee work-life balance. In addition, according to findings made by Ruzic and Benazic (2015), sales managers can also reduce the burnout risk of their salespeople by providing them more social support. Social support from manager, in turn, has been studied to negatively influence the perceived level of rumination, emotional exhaustion and personal non-accomplishment (Kemp et al., 2013; Ruzic & Benazic, 2015), and positively impact salespeople’s job satisfaction (Ruzic et al. 2018).

### **2.3.3. The Importance of a Sales Manager's Work-Life Balance to the Organisation**

Some companies might try to exploit the poor work-life balance of sales managers by assigning them too much work and then terminate them once they no longer perform efficiently. As demonstrated by Ford and Collinson (2011), sales managers are often expected to be fully committed to the organisation by prioritising work over family. However, this is not ideal in the long run as the positive impact of sales managers on the salespeople is also good for the company. For instance, job satisfaction reduces job turnover (Kraft et al., 2019) and can generate high long-run stock returns (Edmans, 2012). The latter is supported by Brown and Peterson (1994), who found that motivated employees put forth more effort, which increases sales performance. This finding is also supported by those of Kemp et al. (2013), who found that salesperson motivation is positively related to customer-oriented selling as well as positive working environments. In addition, job satisfaction is positively related to organisational pride (Mas-Machuca & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016) and it increases fulfilment on the job and at home (Russo & Morandin, 2019).

Braun and Peus (2018) suggest that the organisational culture can be shaped if leaders are made aware of their impact on followers. This also has to do with the cross-over process of work-life balance; stress is easily transferred from one individual to another when they work in the same environment (Bolger et al., 1989) which is why it is crucial that the environment is well balanced.

### **2.4. Theoretical Framework**

An examination of theories will be hereby introduced in order to base the phenomena in the literature review as well as the study findings of this research on a theoretical platform, and to make predictions and draw connections between different topics. These theories connect to both the profession of a sales manager and the concept of work-life balance. As the concept of work-life balance has been introduced by discerning it into three categories of social, individual and employer focused definitions, these theories provide a base for reinforcing these categories.

#### **2.4.1. Border theory**

Border theory suggests that although separate, family and work as domains are mutually influential. In order to achieve a work-life balance, individuals negotiate between the spheres of family and work. Desrochers & Sargent (2004: 41) stated that “integrating work and family facilitates transitions between these domains”. This theory connects to the research by providing a scientific ground for the link between work and life. In addition, it strengthens the concept of work-life balance especially from the employer point-of-view, as it also explains work-life balance from an aspect where family and work domains are mutually influential, and rather complementary elements of a full life than competing priorities (Lewis, 2000).

#### **2.4.2. Spill-Over Theory**

Spill-over theory concentrates on how experiences in one role affect the other either positively or negatively, modifying the roles to be more similar (Morris & Madsen, 2007). Edwards and Rothbard (2000) suggest two clarifications of spill-over: the association between life and work values and satisfaction is positive (Zedeck, 1992) and the behaviours and skills transfer between domains (Repetti, 1987). An example of the latter is when work demands interfere with those of family. Most of spill-over theory research has focused on mood spill-over, although the spill-over of behaviours, skills and values has also been studied (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000). This theory connects to the complex role of sales managers and thus why work-life balance is important to them. It can also be connected to the hypothesis stated later in the literature review that stress issues affect work-life balance negatively. Spill-over theory offers an interesting viewpoint to the individual aspect of work-life balance, where work-life balance is described to mean a satisfactory level of involvement or fit between the multiple roles in a person’s life. In case of a negative spill-over, this fit between roles is hindered.

#### **2.4.3. Inter-Role Conflict**

Inter-role conflict theory appoints what comes about when the demands of one domain harass meeting the demands of another domain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).



Greenhaus and Beutell (ibid) suggest that role conflict happens when the demands and expectations of one role hinder the individual's capacity to meet the demands and expectations of another role (Kahn et al., 1964; Metron, 1957). This theory connects to the complex role of sales managers and thus why work-life balance is important to them. It can also be connected to the later introduced hypotheses of busyness and work overload negatively affecting the work-life balance of sales managers. Especially from a social point of view, inter-role conflict harasses the work-life balance of a sales manager, since the demands of social life cannot be fulfilled.

#### **2.4.4. Conservation of Resources Theory**

Conservation of resources theory assumes that individuals “strive to retain, protect, and build resources and that what is threatening to them is the potential or actual loss of these valued resources” (Hobfoll, 1989: 516). Hobfoll et al. (2018) suggest that the theory posits that stress occurs when central or key resources are threatened with loss, when they are lost, or when central or key resources are failed to gain after significant effort. In addition to connecting this theory to the complex role of sales managers and why work-life balance is important to them, it can also be connected to the later introduced hypothesis of stress issues negatively affecting work-life balance. The theory also reinforces the concept of authentic leadership when it comes to the importance of a sales manager's work-life balance to the salespeople.

#### **2.5. Changes in the Sales Environment**

In his research, Cuevas (2018: 199) states that three key trends affect the transformation of sales: “the nature of customer behavior and evolving expectations of professional buyers, the opportunities (and disruption) offered by new and digital technologies, and the enhanced levels of globalization and competition.” This part of the literature review aims to explain how the two of these three keys, digitalisation and globalisation, have affected the sales environment. The influence that digitalisation and globalisation have had on the sales environment are analysed to form hypotheses of the kind of impact these two phenomena have on the work-life balance of sales managers employed in Finland.

### **2.5.1. Digitalisation**

Due to digitalisation, buyers no longer rely on the information of the sellers the way they did before (Moncrief, 2017). The new buyer behaviour has caused substantial changes in the sales environment, such as searching for product information online without face-to-face contact (ibid) and evaluating competitors with the help of customer feedback found online (Cuevas, 2018). This change was already projected in the early days of digitalisation, when Trailer and Dickie (2006) noted that the advantage of information asymmetry had become the buyers', stating that the buy cycle could now be on its way long before the seller even knew about it. However, it must be taken into account that although the study made by Trailer and Dickie gained 1275 responses, they did not state additional information about the respondents. Today, buyers have more access to information than ever before and are able to decide when to contact sales professionals and how to engage with them (Schenk et al., 2017).

On the other hand, digitalisation has also been projected to enhance sales performance (Cron, 2017), although incorporating the new technology could disrupt the primary selling responsibilities of salespeople (Moncrief, 2017). In fact, Reid et al. (2017) were surprised to find that, albeit all the literature citing the benefits of sales force technology, less than half of sales managers extensively used it. For instance, along with accelerated lead sourcing, sales technology has advanced sales prospecting, lead engagement and automated reporting (Roberge, 2015). In addition to using technology and digitalisation to understand customer behaviour, social media could have one of the biggest impacts on sales as it provides a platform for businesses to reach their customers in completely new ways (Marshall, 2009; Moncrief, 2017; Schrock et al., 2016). New media platforms, such as blogs and podcasts, have also enabled sales professionals to better communicate with each other (Avlonitis & Panagopoulos, 2010).

In regard to sales managers, digitalisation has facilitated their work-life balance by increasing their control over work periods and where to perform work (Mazmanian et al., 2013; Murray & Rostis, 2007). However, it seems that most of the technological change has still posed to be rather challenging for sales managers in regard to their work-life balance. The change of no longer needing to communicate face-to-face in

order to hold meetings, delegate and access each other has led to a blurring of work and non-work boundaries (ibid), which has resulted in many employees being “technologically connected to work all hours of the day and night”, leading them to “end up working everywhere/all the time” (Mazmanian et al., 2013: 1337-1338). This, in turn, has contributed to employees having a strong urge to be available and responsible at all times, incapable of switching off (ibid). Based on this information, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H1.** Digitalisation negatively affects sales manager’s perceptions of achieving a good work-life balance

### **2.5.2. Globalisation**

Connectedness between different economic areas has been increasing vividly since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which means that markets have become all the more global (Honeycutt, 2002; World Economic Forum, 2016). It has been predicted that by 2025, 45% of Global Fortune 500 companies will come from emerging markets (McKinsey Global Institute, 2013), which, according to Cuevas (2018: 200), will present “unprecedented levels of competition to our businesses but also unprecedented levels of opportunity.”

Cuevas suggests that this is why globalisation has become a cornerstone for most businesses and has had its effect on sales as well, pushing them to refocus their sales efforts in some sectors in order to maintain their growth. Busch (2013) adds that, in addition to competition, technology transfer is also increasing due to globalisation. In order to achieve success in a highly competitive and global business economy, changes in the innovations of how customers and suppliers interact have been necessary (Cron & DeCarlo, 2009; Sujan et al., 1988). These changes have considered structuring, compensating, developing and evaluating of sales force to help sustain high-performance (ibid). This has also put pressure on sales managers, who must adapt to an increasingly international environment while protecting their position in home markets (Baldauf & Lee, 2011; Busch, 2013). Failing to achieve a global scale of economy and customer service, the whole organisation could fail (Shi et al., 2010). This could also lead to role overload, which is a phenomenon that explains how having

too many roles at the same time leads to not being able to perform them all effectively (Barnett & Baruch, 1985). Based on this information, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H2.** Globalisation negatively affects sales manager's perceptions of achieving a good work-life balance

## **2.6. Factors Affecting Work-Life Balance**

Achieving the ideal work-life balance can be complicated as individuals and organisations find managing conflict between work and life challenging (Zhang et al., 2012). To understand how a good work-life balance could be achieved, selected factors that affect the balance either positively or negatively are introduced. These factors were selected based on previous researches that have studied the work-life balance of sales professionals. Although many other factors that can have an impact on the work-life balance of sales managers exist, the number of factors had to be narrowed down for this study. Thus, the factors that best fit the objectives of this thesis were chosen. The following literature shows that work-life balance can be affected by the individual, the organisation and the environment.

### **2.6.1. Helping Factors**

#### **2.6.1.1. Job Engagement**

Susi and Jawaharrani (2011: 475) explain job engagement as “the state in which individuals are emotionally and intellectually committed to the organization as measured by three primary behaviours: Say, Stay and Strive”. In a similar vein, Schaufeli et al. (2002: 74) continue the description by stating that job engagement is a “positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption.” In their study, Kumarasamy et al. (2015) found job engagement to have a positive relation to work-life balance, supporting the similar findings by Susi and Jawaharrani (2011). This factor was chosen due to the importance of sales managers staying dedicated in their job in order to motivate their sales team.

**H3a.** Job engagement positively affects sales manager's work-life balance

#### **2.6.1.2. Organisational Support**

Providing support shows that organisations care about their employees and their wellbeing (Eisenberg et al., 1986). Organisation can support their employees via, for example, implementing programs and policies that highlight the importance of work-life balance. These types of programs and policies have been found to play an important part and have a positive relation to employers' regulation and management of work-life balance (Kumarasamy et al., 2015; McCarthy et al., 2013; Russo & Morandin, 2019). Organisational support could also help sales managers navigate in the new era of digitalisation and globalisation.

**H3b.** Organisational support positively affects sales manager's work-life balance

#### **2.6.1.3. Emotional Intelligence**

In agreement with Thorndike (1920), who described emotional intelligence as the ability to act wisely in human relations and understand and manage people, Mayer and Salovey (1997: 5) explained it as "the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thoughts, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth". Emotional intelligence is especially important for sales managers as they are responsible of a team of salespeople who each have their own personalities and ideas. Kumarasamy et al. (2015: 119) found emotional intelligence to have a positive relationship with work-life balance, concluding that because of emotional intelligence, it is easier to understand the needs of ourselves and relate those needs the ones we work with, which leads to better work efficiency and work-life balance.

**H3c.** Emotional intelligence positively affects sales manager's work-life balance

## **2.6.2. Hindering Factors**

### **2.6.2.1. Stress Issues**

Stress has been studied to have a positive impact to an extent, such as boosting performance and increasing job engagement (Kraft et al., 2019). In small amounts, it can also increase motivation and help focus (Hargrove et al., 2013). However, increasing stress can lead to a decrease in job satisfaction, lower loyalty towards company, poor productivity and negative performance (Stranks, 2005; Mulki et al., 2015). Stress can also result in burnout, which is caused by chronic stress, and can lead to emotional exhaustion, decreased personal accomplishment and depersonalisation (Maslach & Jackson 1981; Lewin & Sager 2008). In addition, stress can transfer from one person to another (Bolger et al., 1989). Stress issues have to be taken into account in the position of sales managers, especially due to the rising competition caused by globalisation and digitalisation that puts additional amounts of pressure on them. Furthermore, stress issues can be connected to the earlier mentioned spill-over theory and conservation of resources theory, as both theories explore the issues that are partially caused by stress.

**H4a.** Stress issues negatively affect sales manager's work-life balance

### **2.6.2.2. Work Overload**

Work overload simply means having too much to do (Leiter & Schaufeli, 1996). Among many, this issue can also be linked to digitalisation, as sales managers feel they are connected to their work even at home and cannot draw a clear line between work and home, which then leads to them working over hours (Mazmanian et al., 2013). Work overload has been connected to depression and stress related problems (Major et al., 2002) as well as exhaustion and fatigue (Aryee et al., 2005). These factors have been connected to decreased motivation to stay in balance with other domains in life, such as friends and family (ibid). Thus, the work-life balance of the person is negatively affected. Furthermore, this often leads to the employees' frustration of a seemingly non-existent work-life balance (Vogel, 2012).

**H4b.** Work overload negatively affects sales manager's work-life balance

#### **2.6.2.3. Busyness**

Being busy has become a status symbol and a proof of importance (Harvard Business Review, 2016). The authors of the Harvard Business Review article, who have also conducted a research on the topic (Belleza et al, 2017; Belleza et al., 2016), investigate the concept of being viewed as busy in today's world. What their research found was that, instead of associating oneself with scarce resources connected to wealth, people have also started to portray themselves as scarce resources by displaying busyness and lack of leisure, which in turn is associated with higher human capital characteristics, dedication to the job and leadership potential.

In her Harvard Business Review article, "Preventing Busyness from Becoming Burnout" (2019), Brigid Schulte discusses the findings of her research with ideas42 (a non-profit organisation that uses behavioural science to solve real world problems), which show that the conflict between work and life is largely the result of how workers experience busyness. In addition, Schulte found that although many organisations view work-life balance as their core value, all of them still struggle to live up to it. The current ideology of talking about work-life balance but glorifying busyness is not healthy. In their review of factors affecting work-life balance (2017), Vyas and Shrivastava refer to the findings by Grant-Vallone and Ensher (1998), where individuals who experience interference between work and personal life are significantly more likely to suffer from reduced psychological well-being and physical health. Busyness is also a problem that sales managers face due to the increasing workload and complexity of their role (Cicala, 2014).

**H4c.** Busyness negatively affects sales manager's work-life balance

## **2.7. Conclusion**

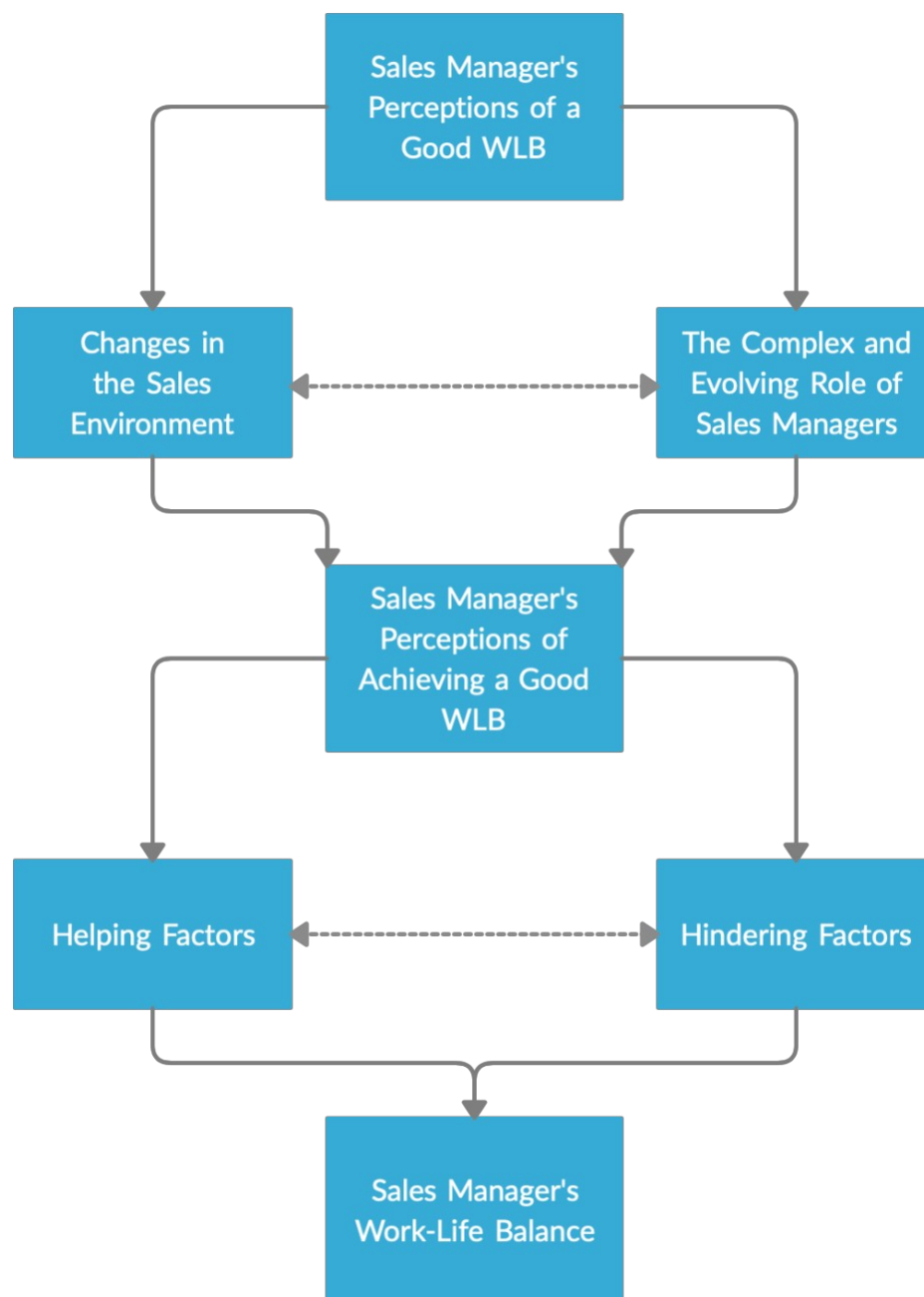
The sales environment and the role of sales managers has gone through a wave of change that has significantly affected how sales managers could achieve a good work-life balance as the transformation of the field continues evolving. With scientific foundation, this literature review has established the following:

1. Digitalisation has shifted the advantage of the information asymmetry to the buyer; however, it has also enhanced sales performance
2. Globalisation has increased competition and pushed sales organisations to refocus their sales efforts to maintain growth
3. The role of sales managers has become more complex due to rapid and continuous changes in the field
4. Factors such as job engagement, organisational support and emotional intelligence have a positive effect on sales manager work-life balance
5. Factors such as stress issues, work overload and busyness have a negative effect on sales manager work-life balance
6. Sales manager work-life balance is important not only for the sales manager, but for the salespeople and the organisation as well

As recognised, studies about work-life balance with sales managers as their focus area, and studies about sales managers specifically, are limited (Busch, 2013; Ford & Collinson, 2014; Plank et al., 2018). More scientific research on the topic should be done. This literature review has attempted to gather and connect information about sales managers and work-life balance to construct a scientific, conceptual and theoretical basis for research.



## 2.8. Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework on Sales Managers' Work-Life Balance (Rissanen, 2020)

This conceptual framework (Figure 1) has been created to visualise the researcher's assumptions of the topic researched, based on the literature review that functions as a foundation for the study. It aims to demonstrate how the role of sales managers and the sales environment they are in affect their perceptions of achieving a good work-life

balance and how the factors that help or hinder their work-life balance have an effect on what their work-life balance actually is like.

The framework will be further explained with tables that map how the framework connects to the research questions of the thesis (Figure 2 & 3).

<b>Conceptual Framework</b>	<b>Research Question</b>
Sales Manager's Perceptions of a Good WLB	What do sales managers employed in Finland consider a good work-life balance to be like in their position?
Sales Manager's Perceptions of Achieving a Good WLB	Do sales managers employed in Finland feel they have achieved or can achieve a good work-life balance due to their position?
Sales Manager's WLB	Which factors do sales managers employed in Finland consider to help or hinder achieving a good work-life balance in their position?

**Figure 2.** Conceptual framework in relation to research questions

<b>Conceptual Framework</b>	<b>Hypothesis</b>
Changes in the Sales Environment	<b>H1.</b> Digitalisation negatively affects sales manager's perceptions of achieving a good work-life balance <b>H2.</b> Globalisation negatively affects sales manager's perceptions of achieving a good work-life balance
Factors Affecting WLB	<b>H3a.</b> Job engagement positively affects sales manager's work-life balance <b>H3b.</b> Organisational support positively affects sales manager's work-life balance <b>H3c.</b> Emotional intelligence positively affects sales manager's work-life balance <b>H4a.</b> Stress issues negatively affect sales manager's work-life balance <b>H4b.</b> Work overload negatively affect sales manager's work-life balance <b>H4c.</b> Busyness negatively affect sales manager's work-life balance

**Figure 3.** Conceptual framework in relation to hypotheses

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The aim of this primary research was to find out what sales managers employed in Finland consider a good work-life balance to be like and what factors help or hinder achieving it. In addition, the aforementioned hypotheses H1, H2 H3abc and H4abc were tested. Based on the hypotheses created with the help of the secondary data in the literature review, a quantitative study method was chosen. However, to help support and answer the research questions and objectives set for this thesis, qualitative research methods were also used by asking open-ended questions which could then be analysed through content analysis.

This section will begin by first introducing the approach and data collection of the research. The section explains how the questionnaire was built and how the data were collected. Next, the sampling method is explained to provide further understanding of how the responses were collected, followed by the survey instrument, which is presented in order to help create a better picture of the structure of the survey. Finally, limitations of this methodology are introduced and explained.

#### **3.1. Approach and Data Collection**

In order to explore the work-life balance of the sales managers, an existing framework by Dex and Bond (2005) was used. In their research Dex and Bond (ibid) built a 10-item questionnaire, out of which nine items were chosen for the survey of this thesis. One of the items was left out due to its irrelevancy regarding this research subject. Their questionnaire measures how respondents feel about their amount of free time, whether they feel they have time for personal relationships and if they feel they are in control of the amount of work they have.

Due to the area of research and how limited the earlier research on the work-life balance of sales managers is, the rest of the questions in the survey were created by the author of this thesis. These questions measured different variables based on the

research questions and hypotheses, which could then be correlated to the work-life balance of the sales managers.

The survey data were collected through an online software called Webropol. This software was used in order to administer the survey online and protect the identity of the respondents. The survey was sent to the respondents via a public link due to trying to collect as many responses as possible.

### **3.1.1. Sampling**

The data sampling for this research was done based on three main criteria:

1. The respondent was in charge of the sales in an organisation
2. The respondent had a sales team they were in charge of
3. The respondent was employed in Finland

The respondents were sought mostly via LinkedIn by sending direct messages and sharing public posts. In order to collect responses from the right kind of professionals, the criteria of the survey respondents were stated in both the public posts and the direct messages. Also, when sending direct messages, the backgrounds of the sales managers were checked with Sales Navigator, a software for sales professionals provided by LinkedIn. The public posts about the survey were shared forward, liked and commented on in LinkedIn by many business professionals, which made it go viral in Finland. For instance, Myynnin ja markkinoinnin ammattilaiset MMA (Finnish Sales and Marketing Professionals Union) shared it to their LinkedIn and Facebook page. In addition, the survey was shared to other people who had worked in the sales field before, who were then asked to forward the survey to people they knew fit the aforementioned criteria.

It is important to note that initially, the research was meant to be done only on sales managers working in the capital region of Finland (Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, Kauniainen). However, due to the difficulty of gaining enough responses, the survey criteria were modified to consider sales managers employed anywhere in Finland.

However, the survey still asked the respondents to state their region of residence, so that if possible, comparisons could be made between different geographic areas.

### **3.1.2. Survey Instrument**

The survey was constructed in Webropol, an online survey tool. It began with informed consent, where the topic and goal of the study was introduced. The respondents were told of the anonymity of their responses and the possibility of quitting the survey at any time. The informed consent also repeated the criteria set for the respondents in order to avoid responses from people who did not match the criteria of the survey. The survey tool for work-life balance was built based on an existing framework by Dex and Bond (2005). Due to the limited amount of research within the subject of this study, the rest of the questions in the survey were created by the author of this thesis based on the hypotheses of the study and the scientific background built in the literature review.

The first questions built base for the research questions of this study. An open-ended question was set first in order for the sales managers to state their definition of a good work-life balance, after which they were asked to answer nine statements regarding their work-life balance in a 5-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. This scale was adapted from the existing framework by Dex and Bond (2005). However, while Dex and Bond used a 3-point Likert scale, a 5-point Likert scale was used for this study in order to gain more specific answers. This was done in order to be later able to draw connections between different variables and the work-life balance of the respondents, which would then help measure the reliability of the hypotheses stated for this research.

The second set of questions concerned issues regarding digitalisation and globalisation, and how sales managers think these two subjects affect their perception of being able to achieve a good work-life balance. These questions were asked in order to measure H1 and H2. Both questions, five regarding digitalisation and four regarding globalisation, were set in a 5-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”.

On the third page of the survey, the sales managers were asked to answer statements regarding different variables that would either positively or negatively affect their work-life balance. These statements were added to the survey in order to draw correlations between the variables and the work-life balance of the sales managers, thus answering H3abc and H4abc. The first set of statements had to do with variables that were hypothesised to have a positive correlation with the work-life balance of sales managers, and the second set of statements had to do with negative correlations. Both set of statements were set in a 5-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, with six statements each.

Lastly, questions that were to answer the research questions of this thesis were asked. The sales managers were first asked to answer three different statements in a 5-point Likert scale “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, the statements measuring whether they feel they have a good work-life balance, whether they think they could achieve one and whether they find it important to have a good work-life balance. Finally, they were asked to answer two open-ended questions and state which actions they take or avoid in order to balance their work and life.

In the end of the survey, the respondents were asked to state their sex, age and region of residence. See Appendix 1 for the full and detailed questionnaire.

### **3.2. Limitations of Methodology**

As the survey was shared publicly to gain as many respondents as possible, it cannot be ruled out that someone who did not match the criteria of the survey respondents still responded to the survey. Although the survey was seen by 20 000 to 30 000 people on LinkedIn and Facebook, a comparatively small number of possible respondents filled it in. This proposes another limitation of the methodology. In addition, as the language of the survey was English, it is possible that people employed in Finland, thus mostly Finnish speaking, were hesitant to answer a survey in another language than their native. It is also possible that some respondents did not understand all of the questions correctly due to the language of the survey. However, to avoid this from being too big of a problem to the sales managers, they were given the option to respond to the open-ended questions in Finnish.

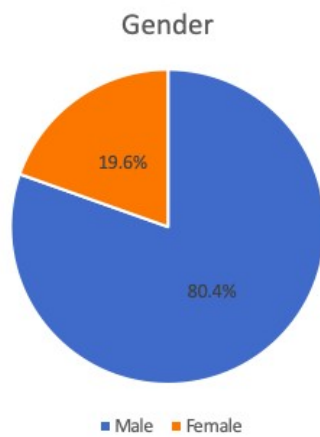
Another limitation of methodology could be the questions in the survey that were created by the author of this thesis due to not finding sufficient questions from earlier researches. As the questions have not been tested before, their significance cannot be connected to earlier studies. However, the absence of sufficient questions from earlier studies demonstrates how under researched the area of the work-life balance of sales managers is.

## **4. FINDINGS**

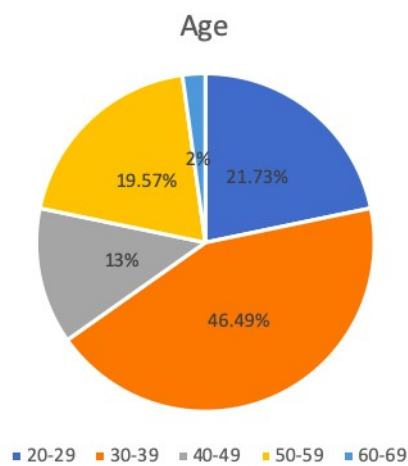
This survey measured how different variables affect the work-life balance of sales managers and how they receive their possibilities of achieving a good work-life balance. The survey results were analysed by using a statistics software called SPSS and will be hereby presented. Further analysis and discussion on the results will be provided in the Discussion and Analysis section of the thesis.

### **4.1. Background of the Respondents**

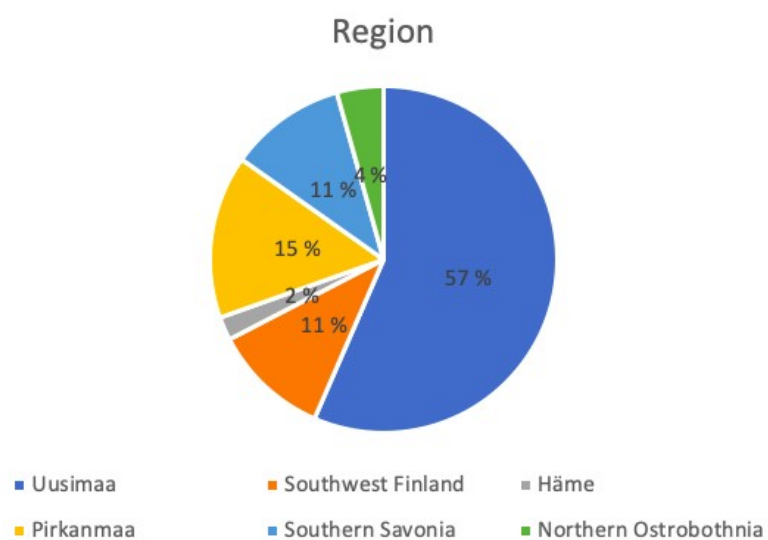
The survey was completed by 46 people within the sample requirements. The data collection period lasted for one week and one day. Out of 46 respondents, approximately 80% were men (N=37) and 20% women (N=9). The average age of a respondent was 38 years, with two modes being 34 and 36. Overall, the respondents' age ranged from 20 to 61 years. Over half of the respondents (57%, N=26) lived in the capital region of Finland (Uusimaa). No respondents were excluded from data analysis. The respondents' highest degree or nationality were not recorded.



**Figure 4:** Pie chart of gender divide of respondents



**Figure 5:** Pie chart of age divide of respondents



**Figure 6:** Pie chart of region divide of respondents



## **4.2. Quantitative Data**

The quantitative data consisted of data that were used to test the hypotheses of this thesis and data that were used to help support and answer the research questions and objectives set for this thesis. To begin the process, some of the survey questions were recoded so that 1 would mean the least balance of work-life balance and 5 would mean the most balance of work-life balance.

### **4.2.1. Data for Hypotheses**

The work-life balance subscale consisted of 9 items ( $\alpha = .901$ ) and the globalisation subscale consisted of 4 items ( $\alpha = .767$ ), making both of these subscales reliable for correlation analysis. For digitalisation scale with 5 items, the alpha did not reach the desired level of .7 ( $\alpha = .655$ ), but the values are very close and likely due to sample size. The subscales concerning different variables that affect work-life balance either positively or negatively were all reliable, except that emotional intelligence ( $\alpha = .691$ ) and busyness ( $\alpha = .670$ ) did not reach the desired alpha of .7. However, the values are very close and likely due to sample size. All of these subscales consisted of two items each. Subscale for job engagement ( $\alpha = .827$ ), organisational support ( $\alpha = .838$ ) and emotional intelligence ( $\alpha = .691$ ). Subscale for stress issues ( $\alpha = .873$ ), work overload ( $\alpha = .937$ ) and busyness ( $\alpha = .670$ ).

The hypotheses and their significances will be hereby listed with graphical display. These findings will be discussed and analysed in the Discussion and Analysis section of this thesis.

H1. Digitalisation negatively affects sales manager's perceptions of achieving a good work-life balance.

		Work-Life Balance	Digitalisation
Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.592**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	46	46
Digitalisation	Pearson Correlation	.592**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	46	46

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Figure 7:** Correlation between work-life balance and digitalisation

Digitalisation and work-life balance were significantly correlated, with  $r = .592$ ,  $p < .01$ .

H2. Globalisation negatively affects sales manager's perceptions of achieving a good work-life balance.

		Work-Life Balance	Globalisation
Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.466**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	46	46
Globalisation	Pearson Correlation	.466**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	46	46

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Figure 8:** Correlation between work-life balance and globalisation

Globalisation and work-life balance were significantly correlated, with  $r = .466$ ,  $p < .01$ .

H3a. Job engagement positively affects sales manager's work-life balance

		Work-Life Balance	Job Engagement
Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	-.016
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.917
	N	46	46
Job Engagement	Pearson Correlation	-.016	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.917	
	N	46	46

**Figure 9:** Correlation between work-life balance and job engagement

There was a non-significant correlation of .917 ( $p = \text{n.s.}$ ) between job engagement and work-life balance.

H3b. Organisational support positively affects sales manager's work-life balance

		Work-Life Balance	Organisational Support
Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.368*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.012
	N	46	46
Organisational Support	Pearson Correlation	.368*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.012	
	N	46	46

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Figure 10:** Correlation between work-life balance and organisational support

Organisational support and work-life balance were significantly correlated, with  $r = .368$ ,  $p < .05$ .

H3c. Emotional intelligence positively affects sales manager's work-life balance

		Work-Life Balance	Emotional Intelligence
Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.066
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.662
	N	46	46
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	.066	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.662	
	N	46	46

**Figure 11:** Correlation between work-life balance and emotional intelligence

There was a non-significant correlation of .066 ( $p = \text{n.s.}$ ) between emotional intelligence and work-life balance.

H4a. Stress issues negatively affects sales manager's work-life balance

		Work-Life Balance	Stress Issues
Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.666**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	46	46
Stress Issues	Pearson Correlation	.666**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	46	46

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Figure 12:** Correlation between work-life balance and stress issues

Stress issues and work-life balance were significantly correlated, with  $r = .666$ ,  $p < .01$ .

H4b. Work overload negatively affects sales manager's work-life balance

		Work-Life Balance	Work Overload
Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.719**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	46	46
Work Overload	Pearson Correlation	.719**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	46	46

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Figure 13:** Correlation between work-life balance and work overload

Work overload and work-life balance were significantly correlated, with  $r = .719$ ,  $p < .01$ .

H4c. Busyness negatively affects sales manager's work-life balance

		Work-Life Balance	Busyness
Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.790**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	46	46
Busyness	Pearson Correlation	.790**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	46	46

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Figure 14:** Correlation between work-life balance and busyness

Busyness and work-life balance were significantly correlated, with  $r = .790$ ,  $p < .01$ .

#### 4.2.2. Additional Data

The respondents were also asked to respond to three additional statements:

1. "I feel I have a good work-life balance."
2. "I feel I could achieve a good work-life balance."
3. "I find having a good work-life balance important."

These statements were not connected to any hypotheses as they were merely asked to support and provide more information for the discussion of the research questions and objectives of this thesis. Like the data for hypotheses, these results will be analysed and discussed further in the Discussion and Analysis section of this thesis.



**Figure 15:** Sales managers' perceptions on their work-life balance

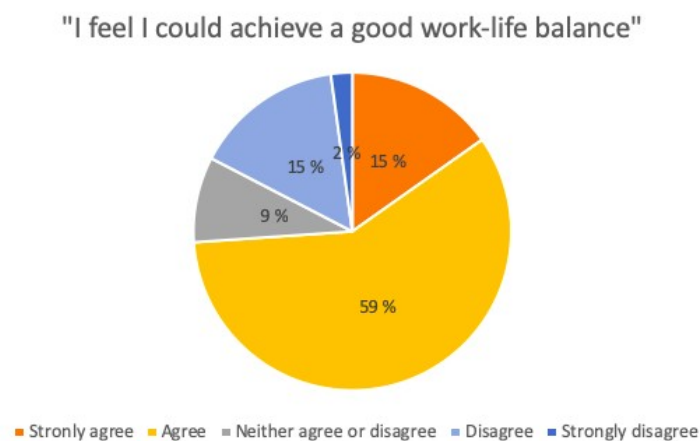
Over half of the respondents (59%,  $N=27$ ) thought they have a good work-life balance. To test this, the correlation between the work-life balance subscale and this scale was tested.

		Work-Life Balance	"I feel I have a good work-life balance."
Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.651**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	46	46
"I feel I have a good work-life balance."	Pearson Correlation	.651**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	46	46

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

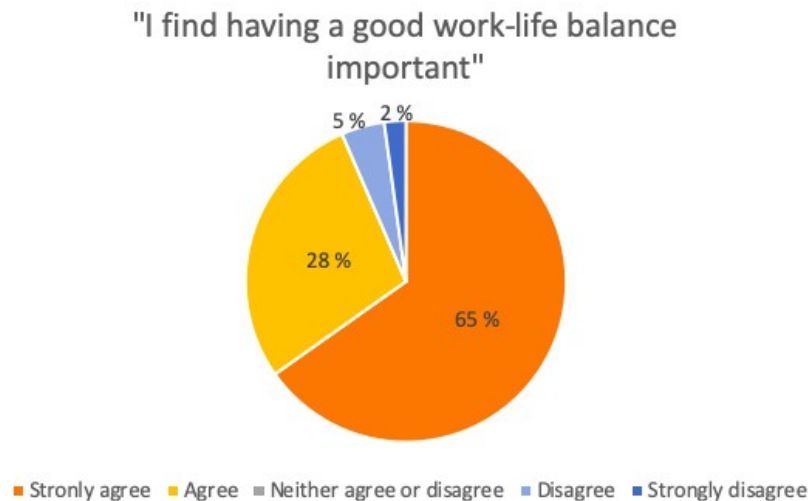
**Figure 16:** Correlation between sales managers' work-life balance and their perceived work-life balance

The graph above shows that the correlation between sales managers' work-life balance and their perception of their work-life balance is significant, with  $r = .651$  and  $p < .00$ .



**Figure 17:** Sales managers' perception of being able to achieve a good work-life balance

Almost 75% of respondents (N=34) felt they could achieve a good work-life balance.



**Figure 18:** Sales managers' perception of the importance of work-life balance

Over 90% of the respondents (N=43) found having a good work-life balance important.

#### 4.3. Qualitative Data

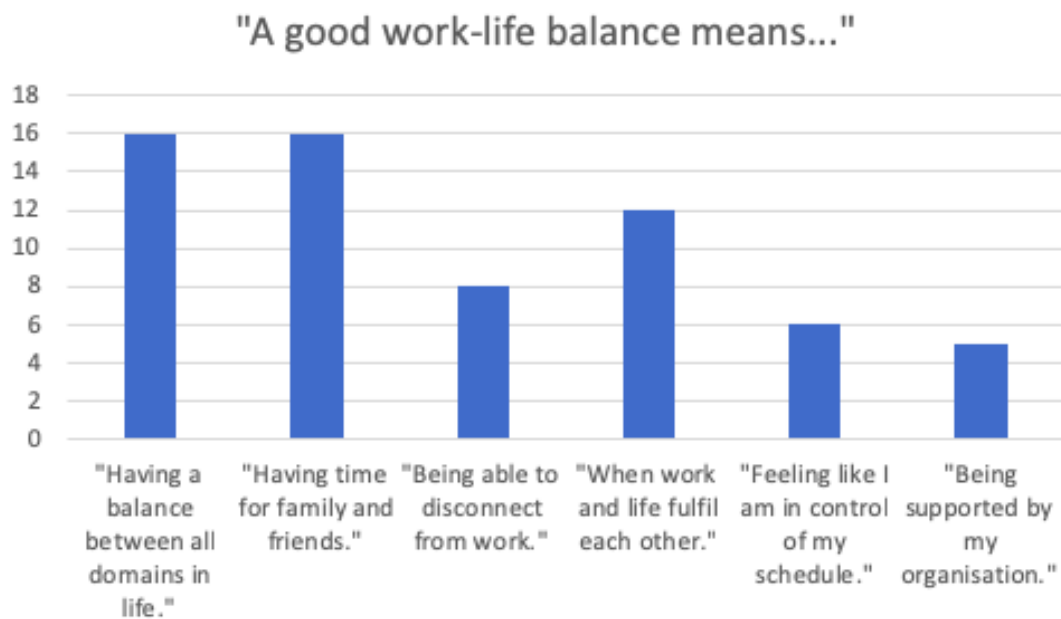
In addition to the quantitative data, the survey also included three open-ended questions for content analysis outside of the hypotheses set for the study. The open-ended questions were:

1. "How would you define a good work-life balance?"
2. "Which actions do you take in order to balance your work and life?"
3. "Which actions do you avoid in order to balance your work and life?"

As seen in the list above, the open-ended questions asked the respondents what they would describe an ideal work-life balance to be like and which steps they take or avoid in order to achieve a good work-life balance. After the survey period was over, the answers were downloaded to an Excel file where they were analysed and divided to different categories based on the questions. These questions were asked in order to provide a deeper understanding of the subject and to answer the research questions and objectives set for this thesis.

When answering the question about what sales managers consider a good work-life balance to be like, most of the answers had to do with having a general balance

between all aspects of life and feeling good about their work and leisure time. In addition to the general definition of “having a balance” (mentioned by N=16), another definition that was mentioned by as many respondents (N=16) was “having time for friends and family”. Interestingly, when describing work-life balance as having a good balance between different domains in life, many respondents mentioned the 8/8/8 system; 8 hours of work, 8 hours of free time and 8 hours of sleep.



**Figure 19:** The most mentioned definitions in sales managers' descriptions for work-life balance

The graph above shows which definitions were mentioned the most often in the descriptions written by the sales managers, with 16 mentions being the highest. The second and third most mentioned parts of a good work-life balance were feeling like work and life fulfilled each other (N=12) and being able to disconnect from work (N=8).

The actions sales managers took the most in order to have a balance between work and life were limiting working hours (N=16) and exercising (N=14). Other answers included taking holidays, turning off the notifications on a work phone and spending time with family. Based on the open-ended answers, all sales managers had at least some kinds of actions that they took to balance their work and life. However, many of the respondents answered this question by listing actions such as “not reading work



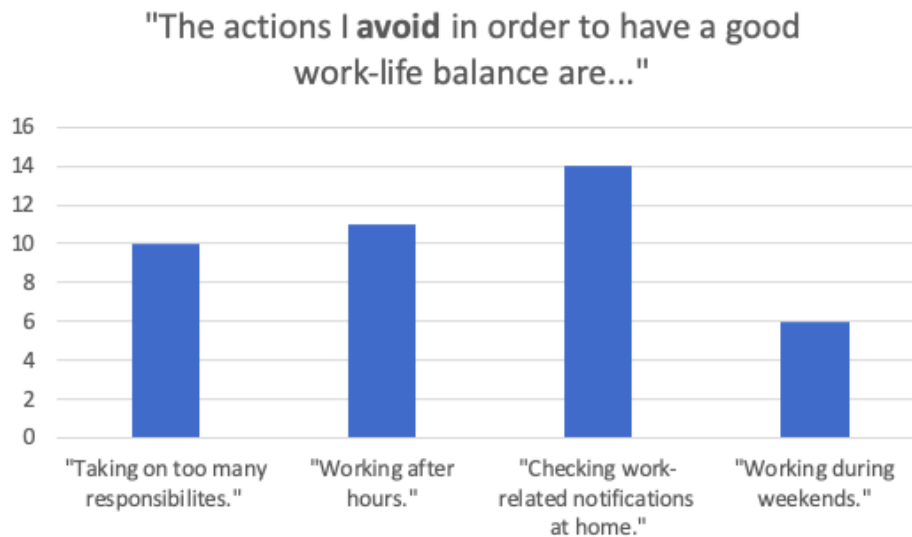
email at home". It should be noted that statements like these are at the same time actions they take but they could have also been categorised to actions they avoid.



**Figure 20:** The most mentioned actions sales managers take to have a better work-life balance

The graph above shows which definitions were mentioned the most often in the descriptions written by the sales managers, with 16 mentions being the highest.

The actions sales managers avoided the most in order to have a good balance between work and life were checking work related messages and emails at home (N=14), working after-hours (N=11) and taking on too many responsibilities (N=10). Other answers included working during weekends, attending unnecessary meetings and talking about work at home.



**Figure 21:** The most mentioned actions sales managers avoid in order to have a good work-life balance

The graph above shows which definitions were mentioned the most often in the descriptions written by the sales managers, with 14 mentions being the highest. The reason this graph only has four different actions is because of the variety of different answers which could not be put into the same categories.

## 5. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

### 5.1. Assessment of Findings

The aim of this research was to answer the following research questions:

1. What do sales managers employed in Finland consider a good work-life balance to be like in their position?
2. Do sales managers employed in Finland feel they have achieved or can achieve a good work-life balance due to their position?
3. Which factors do sales managers employed in Finland consider to help or hinder achieving a good work-life balance in their position?

Next, to examine whether the research questions set for this thesis can be answered through quantitative data and content analysis, the findings of this research will be analysed and discussed. For clarity, the discussion has been divided into sections based on the research questions.

#### **5.1.1. Sales Managers' Perceptions of a Good Work-Life Balance**

The literature review of this thesis introduced the reader to the concept of work-life balance from three different points of view: from a social, an individual, and an organisational point-of-view. This helped to build a better understanding for the concept of work-life balance, especially as definitions of the concept vary in relevant literatures. Next, the literature review covered the complex and evolving role of sales managers and the kind of changes that the field of sales has and is currently going through. For example, Cuevas (2018), highlighted three key findings concerning the shifts in the roles of sales managers, pointing out that sales leadership is projected to become even more crucial in today's sales organisations.

These pieces of literature helped to increase the importance of the question of how sales managers would define a good work-life balance, since based on the literature, it seemed rather challenging for them to achieve one. This concern of the complexity of their role was also connected to three of the four theories in the theoretical framework. For one, it was connected to the spill-over theory, which concentrates on how experiences in one role in life affect the other either positively or negatively (Morris & Madsen, 2007), and the inter-role conflict theory, which appoints the effects of the demands of one life domain harassing meeting the demands of another life domain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). It was also connected to the conservation of resources theory, which assumes that individuals seek to build and protect resources, and what they find threatening is the loss of these resources (Hobfoll, 1989). These theories built onto the importance of exploring how sales managers would define a good work-life balance.

In a similar vein to the literature, there was no general or average definition of work-life balance that could have been distinguished from the answers. These varying definitions could be affected by, for example, the age differences between the

respondents, varying from 20 to 61 years old, and the amount of time they have spent in their role. However, 35% of sales managers (N=16) mentioned the importance of having a balance between all domains in life and having time for family and friends in their responses (Figure 19). Having balance between all domains in life could be connected to the definition of work-life balance from an individual point of view. For example, McDonald and Bradley (2005) described work-life balance as a satisfactory level of involvement or fit between the multiple roles of a person's life.

One reason that many of the sales managers mention balance as part of their definition of work-life balance could have to do with the spill-over theory, meaning that ideally, a good work-life balance would mean that experiences in one domain in life affect others positively, which could then lead to a better balance. Having time for family and friends, on the other hand, is supported by the work-life balance definitions from a social point-of-view, where the importance of spending time with family members and having a good quality of communication and support is highlighted (Karakas & Lee, 2004). This is supported by border theory, which suggests that family and work domains are mutually influential and that individuals negotiate between the spheres of work and family in order to have a good work-life balance (Desrochers & Sargent, 2004). Based on these findings, it could be concluded that the sales managers that responded to this survey base their definition of work-life balance on individual and social factors instead of organisational factors.

### **5.1.2. Having or Being Able to Achieve a Good Work-Life Balance**

The importance of work-life balance within sales management positions was covered in the literature review from a managerial, an employer and an organisational viewpoint. To the sales manager, a good work-life balance could lead to a positive increase in the quality of life (Dominus, 2016), improve their success as a leader (Lyness & Judiesch, 2008) and reduce the risk of burnout (Mulki et al., 2015). It could also increase their salespeople's job satisfaction and motivation (Braun & Peus, 2018) and help the company reduce their job turnover rates and increase their long-run stock returns (Edmans, 2012). As stated in the literature review, a good work-life balance of a sales manager can create a positive snowball effect in the sales team, since salespeople tend to view their manager as a role model (Huggings et al., 2016). These

conceptual tools made the question of being able to achieve a good work-life balance critical.

Firstly, it is important to note how 93% of the respondents (N=46) agreed or strongly agreed on the statement “I find having a good work-life balance important” (Figure 18). Interestingly, no one chose the option “neither agree nor disagree”. Two respondents disagreed with the statement and one respondent strongly disagreed. What these numbers reveal is that almost all of the sales managers that responded to this survey agree that having a good work-life balance is important. This is important to keep in mind when discussing the findings on whether sales managers feel like they have a good work-life balance and whether they think they could achieve one.

As posited in the previous finding in section 5.1.1., the sales manager respondents seemed to view work-life balance from individual and social aspects, which were then related to various theories from the theoretical framework, such as border theory and spill-over theory. These relations could link to why they also view work-life balance as an important part of life – they view family and friends as an important asset in life and want to have a balance between different life domains. In addition, these sales managers might also know how their work-life balance affects not only them but their salespeople and the organisation, which would expand the importance of work-life balance from an individual and social level to a level that also takes into account the employer. This is supported by the discussion in the literature review, because as mentioned in the section “Work-Life Balance from an Employer Point-of-View”, Lewis (2000) stated that work and personal life should be seen as complementary elements of a full life.

When it comes to the statement “I feel I have a good work-life balance” almost 59% (N=27) of sales managers agreed or strongly agreed (Figure 15). When testing the reliability of this statement, it was found that these answers were significantly correlated on the work-life balance subscale of the survey that the sales managers had filled in (Figure 16). Although no hypothesis was proposed in regard of this finding in the literature review, the finding was still surprising. The challenging picture of sales managers’ profession and the factors that were hypothesised to negatively affect their work-life balance in the literature review could have led to anticipate that they would

not feel they have a good work-life balance. However, it must be taken into account that this thesis highlighted more on the factors that could potentially affect the work-life balance of sales managers negatively, since five out of eight hypotheses were about a negative impact. Interestingly, although 93% of respondents agreed to the importance of work-life balance, 59% consider themselves to have a good work-life balance. Part of the reason could be linked to the paradox that even though some managers might have the possibility for more flexibility, they still seek to work longer hours (Ford & Collinson, 2011; Lewis, 2003). Another reason could be that, as demonstrated by Ford & Collinson (ibid), sales managers are often expected to prioritise work over family, which could then lead to them perceiving work-life balance as important, but not aiming to achieve a good one because of their career.

While 59% of respondents agreed on having a good work-life balance, 75% of respondents (N=34) felt they could achieve a good work-life balance (Figure 17). This result seems to contradict with the other results, because 93% of respondents find work-life balance important but only 59% of respondents think they have a good work-life balance. This finding could perhaps be linked to the concept of busyness being a status symbol (Harvard Business Review, 2016), which means that instead of portraying wealth, people have also started to portray themselves as a scarce resource by displaying busyness and lack of leisure. If this is the case, it could be dangerous, because excessive busyness could lead to burnout (Harvard Business Review, 2019). This explanation could also be supported by the inter-role conflict theory and the conservation of resources theory. Sales managers might be reluctant to seek for a better work-life balance as it might harass meeting the demands of other domains in their life. At the same time, they might find it risky, since seeking for a better work-life balance could pose a threat to their current resources.

### **5.1.3. Factors that Help or Hinder Achieving a Good Work-Life Balance**

One of the main objectives of this research was to qualitatively examine which factors sales managers find to help or hinder achieving a good work-life balance, and to quantitatively research which selected factors actually affect their work-life balance positively or negatively. The literature review introduced the reader to the background of sales management and the concept of work-life balance in order to conduct a clear

vision of the profession and how work-life balance might suit sales management professionals. In addition, the complexity of the role of a sales manager and the importance of work-life balance to sales managers was introduced.

A large part of the literature review consisted of different phenomena and factors that could have an impact on the work-life balance of sales managers, and thus the impacts of these selected phenomena and factors were hypothesised to either have a positive or a negative effect. These hypotheses were tested in the survey. In addition to the eight different hypotheses proposed in the literature review, the survey also included a section for open-ended questions for content analysis. Two of the open-ended questions regarded the actions sales managers take and avoid in order to achieve a good work-life balance. The quantitative and qualitative data were integrated for this section of the thesis. However, to help organise the discussion and analysis, this section has been divided into three subsections.

#### **5.1.3.1. Impacts of Changes in the Sales Environment to Work-Life Balance**

The literature review covered two of the key trends affecting the transformation of sales, as set by Cuevas (2018); digitalisation and globalisation.

It was established that digitalisation has changed the buyer-seller dyad to be in favour of the buyer (Cuevas, 2018, Trailer & Dickie, 2006), as the buyers have more access to information today than ever before (Schenk et al., 2017). On the other hand, digitalisation has enabled organisations to enhance their sales performance (Cron, 2017) and to accelerate their lead sourcing and sales technology (Roberge, 2015). Digitalisation has also given managers more control over their work periods and where to perform (Mazmanian et al., 2013; Murray & Rostis, 2007). However, albeit the positive impacts of digital revolution to the businesses, the impact of digitalisation seemed to be rather negative to the work-life balance of sales managers in the light of earlier research. For example, being able to stay connected through all hours of day has led to managers feeling obliged to be responsive and available at all times (Mazmanian et al., 2013). Thus, it was hypothesised that digitalisation would have a negative impact on sales managers' perceptions of being able to achieve a good work-life balance.

Although digitalisation has opened a lot of doors for sales professionals (Cron, 2017), this study found that for these respondents it has still had a negative impact on their perception of being able to achieve a good work-life balance (Figure 7). Based on the survey questions (Appendix 1) and as revealed in the qualitative data (Figure 21), the reasons for this are, for example, being able to stay connected 24/7 no matter of the location the person is at, and seeing work-related notifications, such as emails and text messages, even on free time. The reason for the negative impact on work-life balance could be explained with the help of inter-role conflict theory. When domains of work harass the domains of personal life, individuals feel that their capacity to meet the demands and expectations of different roles are hindered (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kahn et al., 1964; Metron, 1957). To strengthen the adaptability of this theory, it is important to note that this theory has been connected to the definition of work-life balance from a social point-of-view earlier in this thesis. What was later found out in this thesis was that the respondents tended to define work-life balance from an individual and a social point of view, to which the inter-role conflict theory was also linked to.

The other phenomenon discussed in the literature review was globalisation. As connectedness between economic areas has been increasing graphically since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, markets have become more global and the competition and technology transfer has increased (Busch, 2013; Honeycutt, 2002; World Economic Forum, 2016). These changes have pushed sales managers to develop and evaluate their sales force to sustain high performance. Thus, sales managers have had to adapt to the increasingly international market environment while still looking after sales in the home markets (Baldauf & Lee, 2011; Busch, 2013). Due to the additional pressure and role overload, it was hypothesised that globalisation has a negative impact on sales managers' perceptions of being able to achieve a good work-life balance.

With a significant correlation between globalisation and work-life balance, this hypothesis was supported (Figure 8). The reasons for the negative correlation between globalisation and being able to achieve a good work-life balance could be, for instance, the increasing competition due to globalisation and the additional pressures caused by



increasing national and cross-time zone interactions. Globalisation or actions caused by globalisation were not mentioned in the open-ended answers by the sales managers. Thus, it could be concluded that to these respondents, based on the quantitative data and the open-ended questions, digitalisation had a greater negative effect on their perception of being able to achieve a good work-life balance than globalisation. One reason for this could be that digitalisation enables sales professionals to work from home and stay connected at all times, whereas globalisation is more of a phenomenon that affects how work is done at the workplace. However, as globalisation still has a negative impact on the respondents' perception of being able to achieve a good work-life balance, this finding could be connected to and supported by the conservation of resources theory. Part of the reason sales managers might find the impacts of globalisation negative to their work-life balance could be the underlying fact that they find changes affected by globalisation stressful. During their time in the profession, they have built and protected resources that globalisation might force to let go of or change. This, in turn, causes stress, independent of whether changes to resources had to actually be made or not.

#### **5.1.3.2. Factors that Help to Achieve a Good Work-Life Balance**

The literature review introduced three selected factors that were hypothesised to have a positive effect on the work-life balance of sales managers; job engagement, organisational support and emotional intelligence. In addition to testing the hypotheses of these three factors, the sales managers were asked to list actions that they take in order to achieve a good work-life balance. This way, a better picture of the factors affecting sales managers' work-life balance could be built.

Out of the three hypotheses, only organisational support and work-life balance were significantly correlated (Figure 10). This finding supports the earlier findings of Kumarasamy et al. (2015), McCarthy et al. (2013) and Russo & Morandin (2019), implying that the support sales managers receive from their organisation and manager have a positive effect on their work-life balance. The positive link between organisational support and work-life balance can be supported by the spill-over theory, which explores how experiences in different roles affect the other roles either positively or negatively, which in turn leads to these roles modifying to be more similar (Morris &

Madsen, 2007). In this case, organisational support might increase the sales manager's satisfaction towards different roles in life, not only their role at the workplace.

The reason for a non-significant correlation between job engagement and work-life balance (Figure 9) and emotional intelligence and work-life balance (Figure 11) could be due to the sample size (N=46) or asking the wrong kinds of questions to examine whether respondents were highly engaged with their job or felt supported by their organisation. It is unlikely that job engagement and emotional intelligence were not positively related to work-life balance, as these factors have been found to have a positive correlation to work-life balance (Kumarasamy et al., 2015, Susi & Jawaharrani, 2011). However, although the correlation was not significant, job engagement and emotional intelligence are still important to sales managers, as they increase the managers' positive and fulfilling feelings toward the company (Susi & Jawaharrani, 2011; Salovey, 1997).

The quantitative and qualitative results cannot be directly connected to each other in this case due to the nature of the sales managers' answers to the open-ended question about which actions they take in order to have a good work-life balance. As established in the findings, the most mentioned actions sales managers took to have a better work-life balance were limiting their working hours (35%, N=16), exercising (30%, N=14) and taking holidays (22%, N=10). Although the quantitative and the qualitative results cannot be linked to each other directly, an assumption could be made that organisational support, for instance, enables these sales managers to limit their working hours and take additional holidays. The three most mentioned actions can all be linked to and supported by the theory of inter-role conflict, as the sales managers who responded to this survey want to limit their working hours and take holidays in order to avoid one role (work) harassing the demands of other roles (life outside of work). Furthermore, conservation of resources theory supports these findings further by providing an explanation for why sales managers act this way – simply put, they want to protect resources that are important to them.

### **5.1.3.3. Factors that Hinder Achieving a Good Work-Life Balance**

In addition to the three factors that were hypothesised to have a positive effect on the work-life balance of sales managers, the literature review also introduced three selected factors that were hypothesised to have a negative impact: stress issues, work overload and busyness. In a similar vein to the helping factors, in addition to testing the hypotheses of these three factors, the sales managers were asked to list actions that they avoid in order to achieve a good work-life balance. Again, this way, a better picture of the factors and actions affecting sales managers' work-life balance could be built.

As opposed to the hypothesised positive factors, all of the hypothesised negative factors - stress issues, work overload and busyness - were significantly correlated to the work-life balance of sales managers (Figure 12, Figure 13 & Figure 14). Although stress has been studied to have a positive impact to an extent (Kraft et al., 2019; Hargrove et al., 2013), being stressed for extended periods of time and feeling emotionally exhausted impact the work-life balance of sales managers negatively. This can also be linked to the two theories from the theoretical framework, spill-over theory and conservation of resources theory, which investigate how too many duties and not having enough resources affect humans negatively (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Morris & Madsen, 2007). This, in turn, can be connected to the qualitative finding (Figure 21) which showed that the most mentioned action that sales managers avoided in order to have a better work-life balance was checking work-related notifications at home (30%, N=14), which in turn connects to the earlier mentioned spill-over theory, since a negative spill-over caused by blurring of non-work boundaries can increase stress (Mazmanian et al., 2013).

Work-overload and its negative effect on the work-life balance of a sales manager in the quantitative data can in turn be linked to the action that gained the second highest number of mentions by the respondents in the qualitative data, "working after hours" (Figure 21). What this means is that having too much work to do and too many duties to complete has a negative impact on sales manager's work-life balance, which could lead to depression and exhaustion (Aryee et al., 2005; Major et al., 2002). Both the issue of work-overload and working after hours can also be linked to the inter-role

conflict theory which appoints what comes about when the demands of one domain harass meeting the demands of another domain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Since the respondents do not want work to harass their other life domains, they restrain from working too much.

In a similar vein to the stress issues and work-overload, the quantitative findings of busyness and work-life balance could also be connected to the qualitative findings of actions that the sales managers who responded to this survey avoid in order to have a good work-life balance. Sales managers feel that they are constantly busy and do not have time for leisure. As mentioned in the actions in the qualitative findings that sales managers avoid, they restrain from “taking on too many responsibilities” in order to have a better work-life balance (Figure 21). While busyness can propose risks to psychological wellbeing and physical health (Grant-Vallone & Ensher, 1998), part of the issue of being constantly busy is that busyness has become a status symbol (Harvard Business Review, 2016). This phenomenon was also discussed as part of the section 5.1.2., where it was theorised to help explain why some sales managers felt they did not have a good work-life balance, although they found it important and thought they were capable of achieving a good work-life balance. Like work-overload, the problem with being busy also connects to inter-role conflict theory, as the demands of one domain harass meeting the demands of another domain, which then hinders the individual’s capacity to meet the demands of the harassed domain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

### **6.1. Main Findings**

The aim of this thesis was to research what sales managers employed in Finland consider a good work-life balance to be like and which actions help or hinder achieving it. The findings made via the primary research, in conjunction with the conceptual and theoretical tools derived from the literature review, revealed a great deal of contributing aspects.

Although digitalisation and globalisation have brought a lot of innovative changes to the sales environment by enabling organisations to enhance their sales performance and perform in the international markets, the quantitative and qualitative research shows that they have still posed negative impacts to the work-life balance of sales managers. The qualitative data revealed that the sales managers who took part in this research highlighted the negative impact of being able to stay connected to work-related topics around the clock.

These findings connect to the factors hypothesised to negatively impact the work-life balance of sales managers, and which actions they avoid in order to have a good work-life balance. Stress issues, work overload and busyness were all found to have a negative impact to the work-life balance of these sales managers. In order to have a good work-life balance, the managers especially avoided checking work-related notifications at home and working after hours.

Out of three factors that were hypothesised to have a positive effect to the work-life balance of sales managers, only organisational support was significantly correlated. However, it is highly possible that correlation between job engagement, emotional support and work-life balance was not found due to the small sample size. The qualitative findings uncovered that the respondents limited their working hours, exercised and took holidays in order to have a better work-life balance. It was established that organisational support plays a part in these actions as well.

While there was no general or average definition for work-life balance, 35% (N=16) of the respondents mentioned having time for friends and family and the importance of balance between all domains in life in their definition for work-life balance. The three additional questions set for the respondents revealed that most sales managers believe they have a good work-life balance (59%) and even more respondents believed they could achieve a work-life balance (74%). Almost all respondents (93%) found having a good work-life balance important. Interestingly, it was observed that although almost all sales managers think having a good work-life balance is important and 74% of sales managers believe they could achieve a good work-life balance, only 59% of sales managers felt they actually had a good work-life balance.

## **6.2. Implications for International Business**

Although this thesis and its primary research was conducted on sales managers that work in Finland, the results could still be implied internationally, as long as factors such as the cultural differences between different countries have been taken into account. As implied in the literature review, sales managers and their work-life balance especially are very limitedly researched areas. Thus, the whole field of sales could benefit if this matter was studied further.

Internationally, organisations should especially focus on how digitalisation and globalisation affect their employees. In the primary research it was found that digitalisation and globalisation have negative effects on sales managers' perceptions of being able to achieve a good work-life balance, and thus it should be taken into account. International organisations could, for example, pay attention to taking care that their employees do not get over-stressed due to increasing competition and cross-time zone interaction. This would also give the employees a feeling of organisational support, which, in turn, would have a positive impact on their work-life balance.

It could also be beneficial for companies to track their employees' wellbeing by creating or using an app where the employees could track down their feelings and moods. In that way, the organisation could stay alarmed and change their ways of operating if needed. For instance, if sales managers stated that they had felt stressed for a long period of time, the organisation could come up with a plan to help them with their stress issues. This would be beneficial for both the employee and the organisation, as the work-life balance of the sales manager would not be hindered as much as it otherwise would have.

## **6.3. Limitations of the Research**

Potential limitations to this study exist and are hereby introduced. Firstly, the quantitative research did not have a very high number of respondents (N=46). Although the number of respondents is sufficient to do research, the results are not as reliable as they would be with a higher number of respondents. This issue has also been taken into account when discussing and analysing the findings of this study. Secondly, some

respondents may not have been able to identify with all of the questions in the survey. For example, the survey asked the respondents to rate their feelings about certain statements concerning globalisation. Even though the respondents were told not to think about whether the company they work for actually operates in a global field or not, but rather to think about their perceptions of how globalisation would affect their idea of achieving a work-life balance, questions like this could still have confused some respondents.

In addition, the field of business was not specified, so the respondents could work in the sales section in any type of organisation. It could be that there are differences to the work-life balance of people who work in small Finnish companies as compared to large multinational organisations. It is also important to take into account that 80% (n=37) of the respondents were male, which is why the results could have been different if more females would have answered the survey, as often the role of these two genders is different at home and women tend to do more chores at home than men.

#### **6.4. Suggestions for Further Research**

As mentioned in this study, there is still a lot to do in regards of studying the work-life balance of sales managers. This study, its findings and implications have opened a door for more research. The primary research, especially quantitative, should also be conducted for a longer period of time in order to gain more respondents as it proved out to be very difficult in a shorter time period.

Future studies could benefit from a longitudinal research where they would study how different sales seasons affect sales managers and how their perception of their work-life balance changes during different seasons. It would also be crucial to study the differences between male and female sales managers and their work-life balance. Although studies between genders have been done in other countries, it would be interesting to see what the results in Finland would be, as Finland is one of the most gender equal countries in the world. Studying the work-life balance of sales managers from different generations could also be beneficial in order to find out how people from different generations would balance their work and life. For example, do older

generations find it easier to shut down their work phones and emails for the weekend? Another suggestion would be to study the differences of the work-life balance of sales managers that work in different business fields.



## REFERENCES

- Ahearne, M., Lam, S. K., Mathieu, J. E., & Bolander, W. (2010) 'Why are some salespeople better at adapting to organizational change?' *Journal of Marketing*; 74 (3): 65–79. Retrieved from: Sage Journals [Accessed on 20 January 2020]
- Aryee, S., Srinivas, E. S., & Tan, H. H. (2005) 'Rhythms of life: Antecedents and outcomes of work-family balance in employed parents.' *Journal of Applied Psychology*; 90 (1): 132-146. Retrieved from: APA PsycNET [Accessed on 15 January 2020]
- Avolio, B.J. and Gardner, W.L. (2005) 'Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership.' *The Leadership Quarterly*; 16 (3): 315-338. Retrieved from: ScienceDirect [Accessed on 16 January 2020]
- Baldauf, A., & Lee, N. (2011) 'International selling and sales management: Sales force research beyond geographic boundaries.' *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*; 31 (3): 211–217. Retrieved from: Taylor & Francis Online [Accessed on 17 January 2020]
- Barnett, R. C. & Baruch, G. K. (1985) 'Women's involvement in multiple roles and psychological distress.' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 49, 135-145. Retrieved from: APA PsycNET [Accessed on 13 February 2020]
- Bellezza, S., Paharia, N. & Keinan, A. (2017) 'Conspicuous Consumption of Time: When Busyness and Lack of Leisure Time Become a Status Symbol.' *Journal of Consumer Research* [Online]. 44 (1): 118–138. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucw076> [Accessed on 15 January]
- Bellezza, S., Paharia, N. & Keinan, A. (2016) 'Research: Why Americans Are So Impressed by Busyness.' *Harvard Business Review* [Online]. Available from: <https://hbr.org/2016/12/research-why-americans-are-so-impressed-by-busyness> [Accessed on 15 January 2020]
- Benito-Osorio, D., Muñoz-Aguado, L. & Villar, C. (2014) 'The Impact of Family and Work-Life Balance Policies on the Performance of Spanish Listed Companies.' *M@n@gement*; 17 (4), 214-236. Retrieved from: Cairn.info [Accessed on 5 April 2020]
- Braun, S. and Peus, C., (2018) 'Crossover of Work-Life Balance Perceptions: Does Authentic Leadership Matter?' *Journal of Business Ethics*; 149 (4): 875-893. Retrieved from: SpringerLink [Accessed on 13 December 2019]
- Brown, Steven P. & Robert A. Peterson (1994) 'The Effect of Effort on Sales Performance and Job Satisfaction.' *Journal of Marketing* [Online]. 58 (2): 70–80. Available from: [https://www.dsef.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/The\\_effect\\_of\\_effort\\_on\\_sales\\_performance\\_and\\_job\\_satisfaction.pdf](https://www.dsef.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/The_effect_of_effort_on_sales_performance_and_job_satisfaction.pdf) [Accessed on 31 January 2020]

Busch, T. K. (2013) 'Determining Competencies for Frontline Sales Managers in For-Profit Organizations.' *Advances in Developing Human Resources*; 15 (3): 296–313. Retrieved from: Sage Journals [Accessed on 20 January 2020]

Cicala, J. E. (2014) 'The Individual and Organizational hazards of Loneliness on Salespeople.' *Review of Business and Finance Studies*; 5 (1): 27-36. Retrieved from: SSRN [Accessed on 1 February 2020]

Cravens, D.W., Ingram, T.N., Laforge, R.W. & Young, E.C. (1993) 'Behavior-based and outcome-based sales force control systems.' *Journal of Marketing*; 57: 47-59. Retrieved from: JSTOR [Accessed on 25 January 2020]

Cron, W. L. (2017) 'Macro sales force research.' *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*; 37 (3): 188–197. Retrieved from Taylor & Francis [Accessed on 28 January 2020]

Cron, W. L., & DeCarlo, T. E. (10) (2009) *Dalrymple's sales management* (10th ed.). Danvers, MA: John Wiley.

Clark, S.C., (2000) 'Work/Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work/Life Balance', *Human Relations*; 53 (6): 747±70. Retrieved from: Academia [Accessed on 4 April 2020]

Cuevas, J. M. (2018) 'The transformation of professional selling: Implications for leading the modern sales organization.' *Industrial Marketing Management*; 69: 198–208. Retrieved from ScienceDirect [Accessed on 30 January 2020]

Davies, I. A., Ryals, L. J., & Holt, S. (2010) 'Relationship management: A sales role, or a state of mind?: An investigation of functions and attitudes across a business-to-business sales force.' *Industrial Marketing Management*; 39 (7): 1049–1062. Retrieved from: ScienceDirect [Accessed on 24 January 2020]

Deeter-Schmelz, D.R., Kennedy, K.N. & Goebel, D.J. (2002) 'Understanding sales manager effectiveness: linking attributes to sales force values.' *Industrial Marketing Management*; 31 (7): 617-26. Retrieved from ScienceDirect [Accessed on 22 January 2020]

Desrochers, S. & Sargent, L. D. (2014) 'Boundary/Border Theory and Work-Family Integration.' *Organization Management Journal*, 1 (1): 40-48. Retrieved from: Taylor & Francis Online [Accessed 13 February 2020]

Dex, S. & Bond, S. (2005) 'Measuring work-life balance and its covariates.' *Work, Employment and Society* [Online]; 19(3): 627-637.

Dominus, S. (2016) 'Rethinking the Work-Life Equation.' *The New York Times Magazine* (The Work Issue)

Donkin, R. (2010) *The Future of Work*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Edmans, A., (2012) 'The Link Between Job Satisfaction and Firm Value, With Implications for Corporate Social Responsibility.' *Academy of Management Perspectives* [Online]. 26 (4): 1-19. Available from: <http://faculty.london.edu/aedmans/RoweAMP.pdf> [Accessed on 14 December 2019]

Edwards, J. R. & Rothbard, N.P. (2000) 'Mechanisms Linking Work and Family: Clarifying the Relationship between Work and Family Construct.' *The Academy of Management Review*, 25 (1): 178-199.

Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986) 'Perceived organizational support.' *Journal of Applied Psychology*; 71 (3): 500-507. Retrieved from: APA PsycNET [Accessed on 8 January 2020]

Eurofund, (2012) *Fifth European Working Conditions Survey - Overview report*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

Evans, K. R., McFarland, R. G., Dietz, B., & Jaramillo, F. (2012) 'Advancing sales performance research: A focus on five underresearched topic areas.' *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*; 32 (1): 89–106. Retrieved from: Research Gate [Accessed on 29 January 2020]

Ford, J., & Collinson, D. (2011) 'In search of the perfect manager? Work-life balance and managerial work.' *Work, Employment and Society*, 25 (2): 257–273. Retrieved from: Sage Journals [Accessed 12 February 2020]

Gabler, C. And Hill, R., (2015) 'Abusive supervision, distributive justice, and work-life balance: perspectives from salespeople and managers.' *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*; 35 (3): 247-261. Retrieved from: Taylor & Francis Online [Accessed on 19 December 2019]

Gardner, W.L., Coglisier, C.C., Davis, K.M. & Dickens, M.P. (2011) 'Authentic leadership: A review of the literature and research agenda.' *Leadership Quarterly*; 22 (6): 1120-1145. Retrieved from: ScienceDirect [Accessed on 21 December 2019]

Greenhaus, J. H., Collins, K. M., & Shaw, J. D. (2003) 'The relation between work-family balance and quality of life.' *Journal of Vocational Behavior*; 63 (3): 510–531. Retrieved from: ScienceDirect [Accessed on 1 January 2020]

Greenhaus, J. H. & Beutell, N. J. (1985) 'Sources of Conflict Between Work and Family Roles.' *The Academy of Management Review*, 10 (1): 76-88. Retrieved from: JSTOR [Accessed 13 February 2020]

Grzywacz, J.G. & Carlson, D.S. (2007). 'Conceptualizing Work-Family Balance: Implications for Practice and Research.' *Advances in Developing Human Resources*; 9 (4): 455-471. Retrieved from: Research Gate [Accessed on 5 April 2020]

Guest, D., (2002) 'Perspectives on the Study of Work-Life Balance.' *Social Science Information*; 41 (2): 255-279. Retrieved from: Research Gate [Accessed on 4 April 2020]

Hargrove, M.B., Nelson, D.L., and Cooper, C.L. (2013) 'Generating eustress by challenging employees: Helping people savor their work.' *Organizational Dynamics*, 42: 61-69. Retrieved from: Research Gate [Accessed on 11 February 2020]

Hobfoll, S. E., Halbesleben, J., Neveu, J., Westman, M. (2018) 'Conservation of Resources in the Organizational Context: The Reality of Resources and Their Consequences.' *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 5: 103-128. Available from: <https://icos.umich.edu/sites/default/files/lecturereadinglists/Hobfoll%20et%20al.%2C%202018.pdf> [Accessed on 13 February 2020]

Hobfoll, S. E. (1989) 'Conservation of resources: A New Attempt at Conceptualizing Stress.' *American Psychologist*, 44 (3): 513-524. Retrieved from: Research Gate [Accessed 13 February 2020]

Honeycutt, E. (2002) 'Sales management in the new millennium: An introduction.' *Industrial Marketing Management*; 31 (7): 555–558. Retrieved from: ResearchGate [Accessed on 17 December 2019]

McDonald, P., Bradley, L.M., (20:20) (2005) 'The Case for Work-Life Balance – Closing the Gap between Policy and Practice' Australia: Hudson Global Resources

Huggins, K. A., White, D. W., Stahl, J. (2016) 'Antecedents to sales force job motivation and performance: The critical role of emotional intelligence and affect-based trust in retailing managers.' *International Journal of Sales, Retailing and Marketing*; 5 (1): 27-37. Retrieved from: EBSCOhost [Accessed on 2 February 2020]

Kahn, R. L., Wolfe, D. M., Quinn, R. P., Snoek, J. D., & Rosenthal, R. A. (1964). 'Organizational stress: Studies in role conflict and ambiguity.' John Wiley. Retrieved from: APA PsycNET [Accessed 13 February 2020]

Karakas, F., Lee, M. D., & MacDermid, S. M. (2004) 'Analysis of work-life balance from the viewpoint of Iranian accountants' *Equal Opportunities International*, 23 (1/2): 57-77. Retrieved from: Emerald Insight [Accessed on 11 February 2020]

Kemp, E., Borders, A.L. And Ricks, J.M., (2013) 'Sales manager support: fostering emotional health in salespeople.' *European Journal of Marketing*; 47 (3-4): 635-654. Retrieved from: ResearchGate [Accessed on 14 December 2019]

Kirchmeyer, C. (2000). 'Work-life initiatives: greed or benevolence regarding workers' time?' *Trends in Organizational Behavior*, 7, 79–94. Retrieved from: Google Scholar [Accessed on 22 January 2020]

Kraft, F.B., Maity, D. And Porter, S., (2019) 'The salesperson wellness lifestyle, coping with stress and the reduction of turnover.' *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*; 34 (2), 347-359. Retrieved from: Emerald Insight [Accessed on 20 December 2019]

Lacoste, S. (2018) 'From selling to managing strategic customers – a competency analysis.' *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 38 (1): 92-122. Retrieved from: Research Gate [Accessed on 10 February 2020]

Leiter, M. P., & Schaufeli, W. B. (1996) 'Consistency of the burnout construct across occupations.' *Anxiety, Stress and Coping – An International Journal*; 9: 229-243. Retrieved from: Taylor & Francis Online [Accessed on 3 January 2020]

Lewin, J. E. & Sager J. K. (2008) 'Salesperson burnout: A Test of the Coping-Mediational Model of Social Support.' *Journal of personal Selling & Sales management*; 28 (3): 233-246. Retrieved from: Taylor & Francis Online [Accessed on 10 January 2020]

Lewis, S. (2000) "Workplace Programmes and Policies in the United Kingdom", *Organizational Change and Gender Equity*, London: Sage.

Lewis, S. (2003) 'The integration of paid work and the rest of life: is post-industrial work the new leisure?' *Leisure Studies*, 22 (4): 343–355. Retrieved from Research Gate [Accessed on 12 February 2020]

Littig, B. (2008) 'Work-Life Balance – Catchword or Catalyst for Sustainable Work?' *IHS Sociological Series; Working Paper 85*; p. 1-14. Available from: [https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/1f53/81c40c86fba0ea5ae7c3b5ae2f8ccaef62a1.pdf?\\_ga=2.129348428.1558472454.1586300575-1824391971.1586300575](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/1f53/81c40c86fba0ea5ae7c3b5ae2f8ccaef62a1.pdf?_ga=2.129348428.1558472454.1586300575-1824391971.1586300575)

Locke, E. A. (1976) *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology*, Chicago: Rand McNally.

Lyness, K.S. And Judiesch, M.K. (2008) 'Can a manager have a life and a career? International and multisource perspectives on work-life balance and career advancement potential.' *Journal of Applied Psychology* [Online]. 93 (4): 789-805. Available from: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ed88/aa3c6f24c7bccace509d5da55f8b29ffafe4.pdf> [Accessed on 19 December 2019]

Major, V. S., Klein, K. J., & Ehrhart, M. G. (2002) 'Work time, work interference with family, and psychological distress.' *Journal of Applied Psychology*; 87: 427-436. Retrieved from: APA PsycNET [Accessed on 28 January 2020]

Marks, S. R., & MacDermid, S. M. (1996) 'Multiple roles and the self: A theory of role balance.' *Journal of Marriage and the Family*; 58 (2): 417– 432. Retrieved from: JSTOR [Accessed on 25 January 2020]

Marshall, Greg W., Moncrief, William C., Rudd, John M. & Lee, N. (2009) 'Revolution in Sales: The Impact of Social Media and Related to Technology on the Selling Environment.' *Southeast Asian Journal of Tropical Medicine and Public Health*; 40 (5): 1015–1024. Retrieved from: Taylor & Francis Online [Accessed on 1 February 2020]

Mas-Machuca, M., Berbegal-Mirabent, J. And Alegre, I., (2016) 'Work-life balance and its relationship with organizational pride and job satisfaction.' *Journal of Managerial Psychology*; 31 (2): 586-602. Retrieved from: Emerald Insight [Accessed on 10 December 2019]

Maslach, C. And Jackson S. E. (1981) 'The measurement of experienced burnout.' *Journal of Organizational Behavior*; 2 (2): 99-113. Retrieved from: ResearchGate [Accessed on 10 January 2020]

Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1997) *Emotional development and emotional intelligence: Educational implications*. New York: Basic Books.

Mazmanian, M., W. J. Orlikowski, and J. Yates (2013) 'The Autonomy Paradox: The Implications of Mobile Email Devices for Knowledge Professionals.' *Organization Science*; 24 (5): 1337–57. Retrieved from: Academia [Accessed on 27 January 2020]

McCarthy, A., Cleveland, J. N., Hunter, S., Darcy, C., & Grady, G. (2013) 'Employee work-life balance outcomes in Ireland: A multilevel investigation of supervisory support and perceived organizational support.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*; 24 (6): 1257-1276. Retrieved from: ResearchGate [Accessed on 2 February 2020]

McKinsey Global Institute (2013) *The shifting global business landscape* [Online]. Available from: <http://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/urbanization/urban-world-the-shifting-global-business-landscape> [Accessed 31 January 2020]

Moncrief, W. C. (2017) 'Are sales as we know it dying... or merely transforming?' *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*; 37 (4): 271–279. Retrieved from: Taylor & Francis [Accessed on 31 January 2020]

Morris, M. L., & Madsen, S. R. (2007) 'Advancing work-life integration in individuals, organizations, and communities.' *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 9 (4): 439–454. Retrieved from: SAGE Journals [Accessed on February 13 2020]

Mulki, J. P., Jaramillo, F., Goad, E. A., Rivera Pesquera, M. (2015) 'Regulation of emotions, interpersonal conflict, and job performance for salespeople.' *Journal of Business Research*; 68 (3): 623-630. Retrieved from: ScienceDirect [Accessed on 21 January 2020]

Murray, William C., & Rostis (2007) "Who's Running the Machine?" A Theoretical Exploration of Work Stress and Burnout of Technologically Tethered Workers.' *Journal of Individual Employment Rights*; (12) 3: 249–63.

Plank, R. E., Reid, D. A., Koppitsch, S. E., & Meyer, J. (2018) 'The sales manager as a unit of analysis: a review and directions for future research.' *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*; 38 (1): 78–91. Retrieved from: Taylor & Francis [Accessed on 20 December 2020]

Reid, D. A., Plank, R. E., Peterson, R. M., & Rich, G. A. (2017) 'Examining the use of sales force management practices.' *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 32(7): 974–986. Retrieved from: Emerald Insight [Accessed on 9 January 2020]

Reiter, N. (2007) 'Work Life Balance: What DO You Mean? The Ethical Ideology Underpinning Appropriate Application.' *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 43 (2): 273–294. Retrieved from: Sage Journals [Accessed 11 February 2020]

Repetti, R. (1987) 'Individual and Common Components of the Social Environment at Work and Psychological Well-Being.' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52 (4): 710-20. Retrieved from: Research Gate [Accessed 13 February 2020]

Roberge, M. (2015) *The Sales Acceleration Formula: Using Data, Technology, and Inbound Selling to Go from \$0 to \$100 Million*. Apple Books

Russo, M. & Morandin, G., (2019) 'Better Work-Life Balance Starts with Managers.' *Harvard Business Review* [Online]. Available from: <https://hbr.org/2019/08/better-work-life-balance-starts-with-managers> [Accessed on 12 December 2019]

Ruzic, E., Benazic, D. and Tezzele, R.B. (2018) 'The Influence of Sales Management Control, Sales Management Support and Satisfaction with Manager on Salespeople's Job Satisfaction.' *Ekonomski Vjesnik* [Online]. 31 (1): 111-123. Available from: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/ojs/index.php/ekonomski-vjesnik/article/view/5691/4578> [Accessed on 15 December 2019]

Ruzic, E. & Benazic, D., (2015) 'Salesperson Burnout: Exploring the Link with the Manager Support' [Online]. Available from: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/2743/04a8a15763a5f154edcfbf53b890e13d45a8.pdf> [Accessed on 15 December 2019]

Schaufeli, W. B., Salanova, M., Gonzalez-Roma, V., & Bakker, A. B. (2002) 'The measurement of engagement and burnout: A confirmative analytic approach.' *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology* [Online]. 73: 53-66. Available from: <https://www.wilmarschaufeli.nl/publications/Schaufeli/178.pdf> [Accessed on 18 December 2019]



Schenk, Tamara., Dickie, J. (2017) 'Sales Managers: Overwhelmed and Underdeveloped.' *Sales Management Enablement Report* [Online]. Available from <https://www.csoinsights.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/02/CSO-Insights-Sales-Managers-Overwhelmed-and-Underdeveloped.pdf> [Accessed on 27 December 2019]

Schwepker, C. H. (2015) 'Influencing the salesforce through perceived ethical leadership: The role of salesforce socialization and person–organization fit on salesperson ethics and performance.' *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*; 35 (4): 292–313. Retrieved from Taylor & Francis [Accessed on 17 January 2020]

Shi, L.H., White, J.C., Zou S., & Cavusgil ST (2010) 'Global account management strategies: Drivers and outcomes.' *Journal of International Business Studies*, 41, 620–638. Retrieved from: Research Gate [Accessed on 12 February 2020]

Smith, B. & Rutigliano, T. (2003) *Discover Your Sales Strengths – How the World's Greatest Salespeople Develop Winning Careers*. Google Books

Stranks, J. (2005) *Stress at work: Management and prevention*. Oxford: Elsevier.

Sujan, H., Weitz, B., & Sujan, M. (1988) 'Increasing sales productivity by getting salespeople to work smarter.' *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 8 (2), 9-19. Retrieved from: Taylor & Francis [Accessed on 10 February 2020]

Susi, S., & Jawaharrani, K. (2011) 'Work-life balance: the key driver of employee engagement.' *Asian Journal of Management Research* [Online]. 2 (1): 474-483. Available from: <http://www.ipublishing.co.in/ajmrvol1no1/voltwo/EIJMRS2041.pdf> [Accessed on 2 February 2020]

Teixeira, R., & Nascimento, I. (2011). 'Conciliação trabalho- família: Contribuições de medidas adoptadas por organizações portuguesas.' *Revista Brasileira de Orientação Profissional*; 2, 215-225.

Thorndike, R. L. (1920) 'Intelligence and its uses.' *Harper's Magazine*; 140, 227-235.

Trailer, B. & Dickie, J., (2006) 'Understanding what your sales manager is up against.' *Harvard Business Review*. 84 (7-8): 48-+. Retrieved from: ResearchGate [Accessed on 13 December 2019]

Verbeke, W., Dietz, B., & Verwaal, E. (2011) 'Drivers of sales performance: A contemporary meta-analysis. Have salespeople become knowledge brokers?' *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*; 39 (3): 407–428. Retrieved from: Research Gate [Accessed on 28 January 2019]

Vogel, S. (2012) 'Overtime hours threaten work-life balance.' *Global Business Knowledge* [Online]. Retrieved from <http://globaledge.msu.edu/blog/post/1274/overtime-hours-threaten-work-life-balance>

Vyas, A. & Shrivastava, D., (2017) 'Factors Affecting Work Life Balance - A Review.' *Pacific Business Review International* [Online]. 9 (7): 194-200. Available from: [http://www.pbr.co.in/2017/2017\\_\\_month/Jan/20.pdf](http://www.pbr.co.in/2017/2017__month/Jan/20.pdf) [Accessed on 14 December 2019]

Wayshak, M. (2018) *Mark Wayshak – Sales Research and Insights*. Available from: <https://www.marcwayshak.com/sales-statistics/>

Warhurst, C., Eikhof, D. & Haunschild A (2008) 'Out of balance or just out of bounds? Analysing the relationship between work and life.' In: Warhurst, C. et al. *Work Less Live More? Critical Analysis of the Work-Life Boundary*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1–21.

World Economic Forum (2012) *The rise of emerging market multinationals: this is how they can become global industry leaders*. Available from: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/12/emerging-market-multinationals/> [Accessed on 31 January 2020]

Zedeck, S. (1992) 'Introduction: Exploring the domain of work and family concerns.' *Frontiers of industrial and organizational psychology*, 5, 1–32. Retrieved from: APA PsycNET [Accessed 13 February 2020]

Zhang, M., Griffeth, R.W. & Fried, D.D. (2012) 'Work-family conflict and individual consequence', *Journal of Managerial Psychology*; 27 (7): 696-713. Received from: Research Gate [Accessed on 7 January 2020]

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Questionnaire Design: Survey on the Work-Life Balance of Sales Managers

#### Survey for the Work-Life Balance of Sales Managers

##### Informed Consent

This is a survey that measures what sales managers located in Finland consider an ideal work-life balance to be like, whether they feel they have achieved it or can achieve it, and what factors help or hinder achieving it. In this context, a sales manager is someone who is responsible for leading and guiding a team of sales people in an organisation. This survey will solely be used for my Bachelor's Thesis in Aalto University and will not be shared. **You may answer the open ended questions in English or Finnish.** Please be aware that you cannot go back in the survey once you click "next".

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and anonymous. If you decide not to participate there will not be any negative consequences. By clicking "next" you are indicating that you have read the description of the study and that you agree to the terms as described.

I greatly appreciate you taking your time and helping me. This survey will take about 7-10 minutes to fill out. Thank you in advance for your participation!

For questions, please contact: reeta.rissanen@aalto.fi

Please answer the following open ended question. You may write as much or as little as you like.

##### 1. How would you define a good work-life balance? \*


Please read each statement and select how it applies to you. Do not spend too much time on any statement.

##### 2. Questions about work-life balance \*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
At the moment, because work demands it, I usually work long hours. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
There isn't much time to socialise/relax with my partner/see family and friends during the week. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have to take work home most evenings. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relaxing and forgetting about work issues is hard to do. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I worry about the effect of work stress on my health. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finding time for hobbies, leisure activities, and/or maintaining friendships and extended family relationships is difficult. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to reduce my working hours and stress levels, but feel I have no control over the current situation. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My family are missing out on my input, either because I don't see enough of them/am too tired. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I often work late or at weekends to deal with paperwork without interruptions. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please select how each statement applies to you. The statements measure how certain phenomena affect sales manager's perceptions of them being able to achieve a good work-life balance.

**3. Digitalisation: In this context, digitalisation means using digital technologies to change a business model and provide new revenue and value-producing opportunities.**

**These next set of questions will ask you about your perceptions of digitalisation. In this context, we do NOT mean whether your current company uses digital technologies or not, but rather how digitalisation WOULD affect your perceptions of being able to achieve a good work-life balance. \***

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Being able to stay connected 24/7 through technological communication has a negative effect on my perception of being able to achieve a good work-life balance. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Incorporating new technology to work has a negative effect on my perception of being able to achieve a good work-life balance. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being able to work from home has a negative effect on my perception of being able to achieve a good work-life balance. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The flood of emails and phonecalls have a negative effect on my perception of being able to achieve a good work-life balance. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think my job has changed for the worse as a result of technological developments. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**4. Globalisation: In this context, globalisation means that the company operates in multiple countries.**

**These next set of questions will ask you about your perceptions of globalisation. In this context, we do NOT mean whether your current company operates globally or not, but rather how globalisation WOULD affect your perceptions of being able to achieve a good work-life balance. \***

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Continuous globalisation of markets puts additional pressures on me, making a good work-life balance harder to achieve. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing national and cross-time zone interaction puts additional pressures on me, making a good work-life balance harder to achieve. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing competition due to globalisation puts additional pressures on me, making a good work-life balance harder to achieve. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think my job has changed for the worse as a result of increasing global competition. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**5. Please answer the following statements. Do not spend too much time on any statement. \***

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel committed to my company. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel fulfilled and have positive feelings towards my company. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel supported by my organisation. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel supported by my manager. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand the needs of others and myself. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I care about my sales forces wellbeing. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**6. Please answer the following statements. Do not spend too much time on any statement. \***

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am often stressed for extended periods of time. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel emotionally exhausted. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have too much work to do and there are often more tasks than I can complete. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a lot of duties and it often feels there are too many of them. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am constantly busy. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do not have time for leisure. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**7. Please read each statement and select how it applies to you. Do not spend too much time on any statement. \***

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel I have a good work-life balance. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel I could achieve a good work-life balance. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I find having a good work-life balance important. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**8. What actions do you TAKE in order to balance your work and life? You may write as much or as little as you like. \***


**9. What actions do you AVOID in order to balance your work and life? You may write as much or as little as you like. \***


**10. Gender \***

- ☐ Male  
☐ Female  
☐ Other  
☐ Prefer not to say

**11. Age (in years) \***

--

**12. Region of residence \***

- ☐ Uusimaa
- ☐ Varsinais-Suomi
- ☐ Satakunta
- ☐ Häme
- ☐ Pirkanmaa
- ☐ Päijät-Häme
- ☐ Kymenlaakso
- ☐ Etelä-Karjala
- ☐ Etelä-Savo
- ☐ Pohjois-Savo
- ☐ Pohjois-Karjala
- ☐ Keski-Suomi
- ☐ Etelä-Pohjanmaa
- ☐ Pohjanmaa
- ☐ Keski-Pohjanmaa
- ☐ Pohjois-Pohjanmaa
- ☐ Kainuu
- ☐ Lappi
- ☐ Ahvenanmaa